A Man with Purpose

The Rupert Brooke Story

Rupert Brooke
A memoir by Edward Marsh
Letters from America
Written by Rupert Brooke

SPECIAL EDITION

Series Editor GARY BRIN

With Rare Photographs and Additional Biographical Information

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MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Forever Immortal

Rupert Brooke

Life isn’t forever but words are eternal.

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Introduction

The biographical collections in this special edition are of published material written about Rupert Brooke by his friend Edward Marsh as well as detailed letters written by Brooke during his travels to Canada and the United States just prior to his tragic passing at 27. In order to retain as much of the historical accuracy of each title, both books was reprinted from page image scans of the originals. The text pages of each book in this edition were not changed or corrected in any way from the original publications of 1918 and 1916. However, it should be noted that page images from both books featured have been digitally restored and renumbered in order to be merged into this volume. Copies of both books featured in this volume can be found online at the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Public Library in their original formats.

Rupert Brooke was first published in 1918 as a tribute to his short life by his friend Edward Marsh. Using some of Brooke's own letters to tell his story makes for a more personal account of the World War I era poet whose words still resonate. Marsh's memoir of Brooke creates an image of a sympathetic young man who was living on borrowed time though unaware—allowing for many of Brooke's faults as a human being to be shown through self-absorbed behavior as well as feelings of self-worth. Readers

can come to their own conclusions about the lessons Brooke seemed to learn before his death at 27 through the letters Marsh includes in his tribute to a friend who died much too soon.

Letters from America (published after his death) acts like the autobiography Brooke never lived to write as he recounted his travels but also offered a personal look about his character and his feelings of self-worth which seemed to define how he saw himself and assumed it was how everyone else saw him. Many poets before and after Brooke has been forgotten or ignored by present-day readers of poetry—and though poets are usually very talented and creative with their wording—it must be noted that Brooke's appeal relied on his youth and movie star looks that kept him a favorite. A century has passed since his death yet he seems more alive today than he did at the time he passed. His words reflected his feelings before and during World War I—and along with his letters he spoke clearly about what he felt while so many others struggled to have the same clarity. Edward Marsh was clearly biased in his view of his friend—and purposely ignored the worst of Brooke's flaws but nevertheless he tried to be fair in how he saw his friend—which is more than other writers of similar books have attempted. Was Rupert Brooke perfect? Free of flaws that has plagued every human being? Not even close. Is anyone perfect? No. Everyone has flaws—some more than others.

Rupert Brooke was one of the most well-known poets of the World War I era—yet at times he doubted his own ability to make his words speak to millions. Though he died suddenly in 1915 at 27 he remains a potent force in war literature today.

Series Editor
Gary Brin

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DIGITALLY RESTORED VERSION FROM
AN ORIGINAL 1918 EDITION

RUPERT BROOKE

A MEMOIR

RUPERT BROOKE

A MEMOIR

BY

EDWARD MARSH

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JOHN LANE COMPANY
MCMXVIII

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INTRODUCTION

I FEEL that an apology is due to those who have been looking for some time for a Memoir of my son. The chief reason for the delay has been my great desire to gain the collaboration of some of his contemporaries at Cambridge and during his young manhood, for I believe strongly that they knew the largest part of him. Up to now it has been found impossible to do this, much as I should have wished it; and as since his death many of them have also laid down their lives, there is no longer any hope of doing so in the future. I have therefore consented to the Memoir coming out now, although it is of necessity incomplete. I cannot speak strongly enough of the ability and loving care that Mr. Marsh has given to the work.

M. R. B.

April, 1918

NOTE

THIS Memoir was written in August, 1915, a few months after Rupert Brooke's death, and my intention was to publish it with his collected poems in the course of that year. Circumstances prevented this, and now that three years have passed I ought probably to rewrite it in the changed perspective and on a different scale. As this is impossible for several reasons, I have had to be contented with a general revision, and the addition of letters which have since come into my hands.

I am very grateful to his Mother and to those of his friends who have allowed me to quote from his letters and from their accounts of him.

E. M.

April, 1918.

RUPERT BROOKE

A MEMOIR

I

RUPERT BROOKE was born at Rugby on August 3rd, 1887. His father was William Parker Brooke, a Rugby master, son of Canon Brooke of Bath; and his mother was Mary Ruth Cotterill. He was the second of three brothers.[1]

When he was five years old his father became Housemaster of School Field, which was his home till 1910. He loved the house and the garden, especially his own particular long grass-path with borders and pergolas, where he used to walk up and down reading. At this House he entered Rugby in 1901, from the preparatory school at Hillbrow, and next year won a scholarship.

His school life was very happy. In his first

[1] Dick, who was six years older, died in 1907; and Alfred, three years younger, was killed near Vermelles in June, 1915, serving as a lieutenant in the Post Office Rifles.

year at Cambridge, reading out a paper on Modern Poetry which he had written at the end of his last term at Rugby for the School Society called *Ἔρανος*, and afraid that the alarming undergraduates might think it sentimental, he excused himself by explaining the circumstances in which he wrote it. "I had been happier at Rugby," he said, "than I can find words to say. As I looked back at five years, I seemed to see almost every hour golden and radiant, and always increasing in beauty as I grew more conscious; and I could not (and cannot) hope for or even quite imagine such happiness elsewhere. And then I found the last days of all this slipping by me, and with them the faces and places and life I loved, and I without power to stay them. I became for the first time conscious of transience, and parting, and a great many other things."

This happiness was compounded from many sources: friendship, games (he played for the School in both the XI and the XV), and books. He was a balanced combination of the athletic and the intellectual types of schoolboy—'always with a ball in his hand and a book in his pocket' is a vivid little description. "Rupert" (writes a contemporary in the VIth who was at another house, and afterwards became an Assistant Mas-

ter [1]), "first of all people at school gave me an inkling of what a full life really meant. I was an awful Philistine, and still am, I fear; but he, with no appearance of superiority or attempt at preaching, as keen as any of us on all the immensely important events in school life, and always ready for a rag, impressed us as no one else could with the fact that these things were not all —not even the most important. And the best thing about him was that he was not out to impress us—it was just being himself."

His great school-friend Hugh Russell-Smith, since killed in action, wrote in the Rugby paper, the 'Meteor,' when he died:—

"For the first two or three years, I think, few of us realised that someone out of the ordinary had come among us. He was rather shy and quiet, though he at once proved himself a good athlete, and he lived much the same life as anyone else. Gradually, however, we began to notice little things about him. Instead of coming 'down town' with us, he used to go off to the Temple Library to read the reviews of books in the 'Morning Post' and 'Chronicle.' He read Walter Pater, and authors we knew very little about. He read a good deal of poetry, and he

[1] Hubert Podmore, who, before he was killed in action, gave Mrs. Brooke leave to publish this extract from his letter to her.

let us find him in raptures over Swinburne. He began to wear his hair rather longer than other people. Still, he played games enthusiastically, and helped us to become Cock House in football and in cricket. Gradually most of us in the House came under his spell. We accepted his literary interests. He was so straightforward and unaffected and natural about them, and he took our chaff so well, that we couldn't have helped doing so. Perhaps they amused most of us, but one or two—and those the most unlikely—were occasionally found clumsily trying to see what there really was in such things. But it was his personal charm that attracted us most, his very simple and lovable nature. Few could resist it. When in his last year he became head of the House, almost everyone came under the sway of his personality. It seems to me now, as it seemed then, that there really was a spirit in School Field which made it rather different from any other House. It was due, I believe, partly to Rupert, partly to his father. The situation might have been difficult for both. The way in which things actually turned out shows one of the most delightful sides of Rupert. He was in all things more than loyal to his father, but he never made it awkward for the rest of us. His sense of fun saw him through, and it helped us

a good deal to know that he would not misinterpret all the little pleasantries that boys make at the expense of their Housemaster. The result was a sort of union between the Housemaster and the House, which made very much for good.

"Outside the House, his worth was realised to the full by some—by the Upper Bench, and by a few of the Masters who knew and loved him. He rose to a high place in the VIth, won two prizes for his poems, played cricket and football for the School, and became a Cadet Officer in the Corps. But I think he was never a school hero. It was chiefly his House that knew his lovableness. And when he was at Cambridge, I think he always loved the House lunches, which we used to have nearly every week. The last letter I had from him was one in which he was talking of members of the House who had fallen in the war.

"Rupert had an extraordinary vitality at school, which showed itself in a glorious enthusiasm and an almost boisterous sense of fun—qualities that are only too rare in combination. Of his enthusiasm it is hard to speak; we knew less about it, although we felt it. We knew much more of his glorious fooling—in his letters, in his inimitable and always kind burlesques of mas-

ters or boys, in his parodies of himself. He seemed almost always ready for laughter. It is often the small things that stand out most vividly in one's mind. I see Rupert singing at the very top of his voice, with a magnificent disregard for tune, the evening hymn we used to have so often at Bigside Prayers. I see him rushing on to the Close to release a sheep that had become entangled in one of the nets. I see him tearing across the grass so as not to be late for Chapel. I generally think of him with a book. He had not yet developed that love of the country and that passion for swimming with which the friends of his Grantchester days associate him. He used to read, when we used to walk or bathe. But whatever he was doing or wherever he was, he was always the same incomparable friend. He has often quoted to me a verse of Hilaire Belloc:

> From quiet homes and first beginning,
> Out to the undiscovered ends,
> There's nothing worth the wear of winning,
> But laughter and the love of friends.

How much Rupert loved Rugby while he was there, I know; and I know too how much those who knew him there loved him."

The letters which he wrote in his last year at school are radiant. "I am enjoying everything

immensely at present. To be among 500 people, all young and laughing, is intensely delightful and interesting. . . .[1] I am seated on the topmost pinnacle of the Temple of Joy. Wonderful things are happening all around me. Some day when all the characters are dead—they are sure to die young—I shall put it all in a book. I am in the midst of a beautiful comedy—with a sense of latent tears—and the dramatic situations work out delightfully. The rest are only actors; I am actor and spectator as well, and I delight in contriving effective exits. The world is of gold and ivory. . . . How is London? Here the slushy roads, grey skies, and epidemic mumps cannot conceal a wonderful beauty in the air which makes New Big School almost bearable." And in the summer: "I am infinitely happy. I am writing nothing. I am content to live. After this term is over, the world awaits. But I do not now care what will come then. Only, my present happiness is so great that I fear the jealous gods will requite me afterwards with some terrible punishment, death perhaps —or life."

'Work' was only one of the lesser elements which went to make up all this joy. He got a

[1] Throughout this book, three dots mean that there are dots in the original letters; six, that something is omitted.

fair number of prizes, and went to King's with a scholarship: but lessons seem to have been almost the only thing he didn't as a rule care for. He would have liked to read the books as books, but grammar irked him. When he came to 'extra work' for the scholarship examination, he enjoyed it. "This introduces me to many authors whom the usual course neglects as 'unclassical.' . . . Theocritus almost compensates me for all the interminable dullness of Demosthenes and the grammars on other days. I never read him before. I am wildly, madly enchanted by him." He never became an accurate scholar, and though he enjoyed certain authors, and had a special love for Plato, I don't think Greek and Latin played the part in his development which might have been expected.

His voluntary reading, at school and afterwards, was mainly English—quantities of prose, but still more poetry, in which his taste was very comprehensive; and his zealous interest in contemporary work had already begun. A paper on Modern Poetry, which he read to the Ἔρανος Society, presses on his hearers Kipling, Henley, Watson, Yeats, A. E., and —— Ernest Dowson. This brings us to his amusing phase of 'decadence.' From 1905 till well into his second year at Cambridge he entertained a *culte* (in

such intensity, somewhat belated) for the literature that is now called 'ninetyish'—Pater,[1] Wilde, and Dowson. This was a genuine enthusiasm, as anyone may see from his earliest published work, especially the poems written in the alexandrine of 'Cynara,' of which the 'Day that I have loved' is the culmination. But he loved to make fun of it, and of himself in it; for all through his life his irony played first on himself. Here is the setting of a dialogue: "The Close in a purple evening in June. The air is full of the sound of cricket and the odour of the sunset. On a green bank *Rupert* is lying. There is a mauve cushion beneath his head, and in his hand E. Dowson's collected poems, bound in pale sorrowful green. He is clothed in indolence and flannels. *Enter Arthur.*" 'Good-morrow,' says *Arthur*. 'What a tremulous sunset!' But that is all he is allowed to say. *Rupert* proceeds with an elaborately 'jewelled' harangue, ending 'I thank you for this conversation. You talk won-

[1] A little parody with which he won a Westminster Gazette prize in 1907 may be worth preserving here: "*From 'Marius the Bank Clerk,' by Walter Pater* (*Book II. Chap. ix., 'Procrastination'*). Well! it was there, as he beat upon the station gate (that so symbolic barrier!) and watched the receding train, that the idea came upon him; casting, as it were, a veil of annoyance over the vague melancholy of his features; and filling, not without a certain sedate charm, as of a well-known ritual, his mind with a now familiar sense of loss—a very *desiderium*—a sense only momentarily perceptible, perhaps, among the other emotions and thoughts, that swarmed, like silver doves, about his brain."

derfully. I love listening to epigrams. I wonder if the dead still delight in epigrams. I love to think of myself seated on the greyness of Lethe's banks, and showering ghosts of epigrams and shadowy paradoxes upon the assembled wan-eyed dead. We shall smile, a little wearily I think, remembering. . . . Farewell.' 'Farewell,' says poor *Arthur,* opening his mouth for the second time—and *exit.*

"I am busy with an enormous romance, of which I have written five chapters. It begins with my famous simile [1] about the moon, but soon gets much more lewd. One of the chief characters is a dropsical leper whose limbs and features have been absorbed in one vast soft paunch. He looks like a great human slug, and he croaks infamous little songs from a wee round mouth with yellow lips. The others are less respectable.

"Did you see the bowdlerised decadent?[2] I suppose the scenery looked extremely valuable. I dare not witness it. Nero is one of the few illusions I have left. All my others are departing one by one. I read a book recently which proved that Apollo was an aged Chieftain who lived in Afghanistan and had four wives and cancer in the stomach; and the other day I found

[1] This was as follows:—"The moon was like an enormous yellow scab on the livid flesh of some leper."
[2] *Nero* at His Majesty's Theatre.

myself—my last hope!—acting on moral principles."

"This morning I woke with ophthalmia," he wrote in another letter, "one of the many diseases raging through Rugby. It is all owing to a divine mistake. I wanted to get rose-rash, being both attracted by the name and desirous to have the disease over before the time of the Italian 'tour' came. Therefore yestre'en I prayed to Æsculapius a beautiful prayer in Sapphics—it began, I think, *ἵμερος νῦν ἐστὶ ῥόδοις πυρέττειν*, . . . but either my Greek was unintelligible, or the names of ills have changed since Æsculapius, for I awoke and found the God had sent me this, the least roseate of diseases."

He wished, of course, or rather wished to be thought to wish, to shock and astonish the respectable; but he did not in practice go very far in that diretcion. His hair, slightly longer than usual, has already been mentioned. Ties might not be coloured; but there was no rule against their being 'puff' and made of *crêpe de chine;* and such ties he wore, as did the other school swells. It was amusing to cause a flutter in the orthodox School Societies, of which he was really an active and enthusiastic member, though one might not think so from his accounts of their proceedings. "Last Sunday I read a little paper

on *Atalanta,* and was mightily pleased. The usual papers we have are on such subjects as Hood or Calverley—'something to make you laugh.' . . . I saw my opportunity, and took it. 'Have I not,' I said, 'many a time and oft been bored beyond endurance by such Philistines? Now my revenge comes; I shall be merciless!' So I prepared a very long and profound paper, full of beautiful quotations, and read it to them for a long time, and they were greatly bored. They sat round in chairs and slumbered uneasily, moaning a little; while I in the centre ranted fragments of choruses and hurled epithets upon them. At length I ended with Meleager's last speech, and my voice was almost husky with tears; so that they woke, and wondered greatly, and sat up, and yawned, and entered into a discussion on *Tragedy,* wherein I advanced the most wild and heterodox and antinomian theories, and was very properly squashed. So, you see, even in Rugby the Philistines don't get in their own way always."

"I am finishing my paper on James Thomson.[1] I have cut out all the wicked parts, but I still fear for the reception. Last week we had a paper on T. Gray. The stupendous ass who wrote

[1] He had 'ransacked the eight bookshops in Charing Cross Road' for Thomson's works. (This is, of course, the author of the *City of Dreadful Night,* not of the *Seasons.*)

and read it, after referring to the Elegy as 'a fine lyric,' ended with the following incomparable words: 'In conclusion, we may give Gray a place among the greatest, above all, except perhaps Shakespeare, Milton, and Tennyson.' This lewd remark roused me from the carefully-studied pose of irritating and sublime nonchalance which I assume on such ocasions. I arose, and made acid and quite unfair criticisms of Gray and Tennyson, to the concealed delight of all the avowed Philistines there, and the open disgust of the professing 'lovers of literature.' I was nearly slain."

He wrote quantities of poetry at Rugby, a very little of which he thought worth preserving in the '1905-1908' section of his first book. Some of it appeared in the *Phoenix,* a free-lance school paper of which he was twin-editor, and some in the *Venture,* which succeeded the *Phoenix.* His verse of this time shows a good ear, and a love of 'beautiful' words, but not much else. A good deal of it was written when he ought to have been otherwise employed. "I shall sit in a gondola," he wrote when he was going to Venice in April, 1906, "and pour forth satires in heroic verse, or moral diatribes in blank verse. Intense surroundings always move me to write in an opposite vein. I gaze on the New Big School, and

give utterance to frail diaphanous lyrics, sudden and beautiful as a rose-petal. And when I do an hour's 'work' with the Headmaster, I fill note-books with erotic terrible fragments at which even Sappho would have blushed and trembled."

In 1904 he was given an extra prize for a poem on *The Pyramids,* and next year he won the real prize with one on *The Bastile,* which he recited on June 24th. "The speeches were rather amusing. I am informed that my effort was one of the only two audible; and as the other was in a foreign tongue, I carried off the honours. I am also told —by a cricketer friend of mine—that half the audience were moved to laughter, the other half to tears, which I regard as a compliment, though I can understand the feelings of neither half. Anyhow I got a Browning and a Rossetti out of it, which is something, though they *are* in prize-binding."

Next year he had to fall back on prose. "I have undertaken to write an Essay for a prize. If I win this I shall stand up next Speech Day and recite weird 'historical' platitudes to a vast slumbrous audience. The idea is so pleasingly incongruous that I desire to realize it. Moreover, I once airily told a pedantic and aged man that if I liked I could understand even History,

and he, scoffing, stirred my pride to prove it. Therefore I am going to write an Essay on "The Influence of William III. on England.' Of William III. I know very little. He was a King, or something, they say, of the time of Congreve and Wycherley. Of England I know nothing. I thought you might aid me in a little matter like this. If ever you have written an epic, a monograph, an anthology, or a lyric on William III., please send it to me that I may quote it in full." He won the prize (the King's Medal for Prose); and as he got into the XI. at about the same time, he left Rugby with honours thick upon him.

II

His first year at King's (1906-7) was rather unsatisfactory. He regretted Rugby; and he was (as always) rather shy, and (for the first and only time) a little on the defensive with the strange people. The 'decadent' pose lingered; he had Aubrey Beardsleys in his room, sat up very late, and didn't get up in the morning. He thought it right to live entirely for the things of the mind; his passion for the country had not yet begun, and it seemed to him a wicked waste of time to walk or swim—two things which came

soon afterwards to give him as much pleasure as anything in the world.

His letters are plaintive: "This place is rather funny to watch; and a little wearying. . . . At certain moments I perceive a pleasant kind of peace in the grey ancient walls and green lawns among which I live; a quietude that doesn't compensate for the things I have loved and left, but at times softens their outlines a little. If only I were a poet, I should love such a life very greatly, 'remembering moments of passion in tranquillity'; but being first and chiefly only a boy, I am restless and unable to read or write. . . . These people are often clever, and always wearying. The only persons I ever make any effort to see are two who came up with me from my House at Rugby. Here across the Styx we wander about together and talk of the upper world, and sometimes pretend we are children again."

He joined the A.D.C., and played *Stingo* in *She Stoops to Conquer;* but his chief public appearance in his first term was in the Greek play, the *Eumenides.* "The idea of my playing Hermes fell through," he wrote to his Mother, "but they have given me the equally large part of the Herald. I stand in the middle of the stage and pretend to blow a trumpet, while somebody in the wings makes a sudden noise. The

part is not difficult." "I wear a red wig and cardboard armour," he wrote in another letter, "and luckily am only visible for a minute." It turned out that he was one of the successes of the evening. His radiant, youthful figure in gold and vivid red and blue, like a Page in the Riccardi Chapel, stood strangely out against the stuffy decorations and dresses which pervaded those somewhat palmy days of the Cambridge Theatre. After eleven years, the impression is still vivid.

At the beginning of next term his elder brother died suddenly. They were very fond of each other, and this was, I suppose, his first great sorrow. "It seems so strange that you haven't heard," he wrote. "I had thought that all the world must know. I suppose I ought to have written and told you; but there were so many letters to write; and I had to try to comfort Mother a little. Dick died on Sunday the 13th after a week's illness. Father was with him—but I don't think details matter much. . . . I came up here on Tuesday, partly to escape my Rugby school-friends, and partly that I might be alone."

"I'm rather wretched and ill," he writes a little later. "In my 'literary life' I have taken the last step of infamy, and become—a reviewer!

I've undertaken to 'do' great slabs of minor poetry for the *Cambridge Review*. I've read volumes of them, all the same, and all exactly the stuff *I* write. I often wonder whether I haven't written several of them myself under a pseudonym, and forgotten about it."

In his first Long Vacation,[1] "I work hundreds of hours a day," he writes, "at stuffy classics, and ooze with grammar. To save my soul, I write thousands of poems in the evening, and burn them. I'll quote to you one verse of an immensely long one in six cantos, entitled 'A Song Illustrative of a Sense of Incompatibility between Self and Universe; also In Favour of Decease.'

> Things are beasts,
> Alas! and Alack!
> If life is a succession of choreic anapaests,
> When, ah! when shall we arrive at the Paroemiac?"

Part of this Long was spent at Lulworth, where he wrote to his Mother: "One day we were reading on the rocks, and I had a Keats in my pocket, and it slipped out, and, falling into a swift current, was borne out to sea. So we leapt into a boat and rowed up and down the coast

[1] I may as well mention that I first met him just after the end of the May Term this year. After this I saw him at intervals, and we knew each other pretty well by the summer of 1909.

till we espied it off some rocks. But the sea was rather rough and we could not land on that rocky part, or get near Keats. So we landed half a mile off on a beach, and came over the rocks to the Keats; and when we found it, I stripped and went in after it and got it. It is indeed quite spoilt; but it only cost two shillings to begin with." (He did not know at this time of an association which he discovered four years afterwards. "Oh, I've read Keats," he writes in 1911, "and found the most AMAZING thing. The last place he was in was Lulworth. His ship was becalmed outside. He and Severn went ashore and clambered about the rocks all day—his last fairly happy day. He went aboard and wrote, that evening, his last poem—that sonnet. The ship took him on to Italy, coughing blood and suffering Hell because he wouldn't see Fanny any more. Fanny sat in Hampstead, with Mr. Brown. It was at the end of Sept. 1820 . . .")

There is a gloomy letter of the day after his birthday, when he became twenty. "I am now in the depths of despondency because of my age. I'm filled with an hysterical despair to think of fifty dull years more. I hate myself and everyone. I've written almost no verse for ages; and shall never write any more. I've forgotten all rhythm and metre. The words 'anapaestic dimeter

acatalectic,' that fired me once, now leave me cold. The sunset or a child's face no longer reminds me of a bucolic caesura. But I still read plaintively, to pass the time." And he can still write at the end of this Long: "Go back to Cambridge for my second year and laugh and talk with those old dull people on that airless plain! The thought fills me with hideous *ennui*."

But this mood was already something of a literary survival, and well understood to be so by his friends. He went back to games, especially football; and by the beginning of his second year he had become one of the most interested and interesting people at Cambridge.

> A young Apollo, golden-haired,
> Stands dreaming on the verge of strife,
> Magnificently unprepared
> For the long littleness of life.

Mrs. Cornford's epigram on him is well known, but one could not write about his great days at Cambridge without quoting it—bitter though the irony of 'long' has now become.

Henceforward friends and avocations crowded on him. He had been the chief advocate of the Labour Party at Rugby; and at King's he joined various societies, political and intellectual, mostly more or less revolutionary—the University

Fabian Society, of which he became President for the year 1909-10; the Carbonari; and the Heretics. He also belonged to that old, great, secret, but vaguely famous Brotherhood from which the membership of Tennyson and others of the illustrious has lifted a corner of the veil. J. T. Sheppard, Fellow of King's, gives an account of some among these activities. "The Carbonari, I think, he founded; a Society which, in spite of its terrifying name, was very friendly. The paper and the talk which followed it at the one meeting to which, as an elderly person, I was allowed admission, were frank and amusing, but my chief memory is of the cheerful kindliness of the members. Then there were the Fabians, whom he sometimes entertained to a frugal supper of bread and cheese and beer in his rooms, and to whom he never tired of teaching the importance of poets and artists in the good society which is to be built up by our children. His advice to the State was very practical. Since poets and artists matter, and since they need time for development, we, who are not the poets and the artists, ought to organise the material requisites, bread and cheese and leisure, for those who seem to show the promise of good work. He believed that you do not improve a poet by starving and neglecting him; and one good way of showing

that we remember him would be to remember also that it is our duty to buy as well as read the works of the poets who are still writing."

Rupert indeed wore his Socialism with a difference, which comes out in a letter of December, 1907, thanking his uncle, Mr. Clement Cotterill, for his book, *Human Justice for those at the Bottom,* in which he says that he has been urging his Socialist friends at Cambridge, especially the Fabians, to take a more human view of things. "Socialism is making great advances at Oxford and Cambridge just now; but its upholders are too apt to make it seem, to others and to themselves, a selfish scheme of economics. They confound the means with the end; and think that a Compulsory Living Wage is the end, instead of a good beginning. Bernard Shaw came down last term, and made a speech that was enthusiastically received, in which he advised a state of things in which each 'class' had its own party in Parliament fighting for its own hand. The whole thing was based on selfishness. It was not inspiring.

"Of course they're really sincere, energetic, useful people, and they do a lot of good work. But, as I've said, they're rather hard. Must every cause lose part of its ideal, as it becomes successful? And also they are rather intolerant, especially towards the old order. They some-

times seem to take it for granted that all rich men, and all Conservatives (and most ordinary Liberals) are heartless villains. I have already, thanks, in part, to some words of yours, got some faith in the real, sometimes overgrown, goodness of all men; and that is why I have found your book so good, as a confirmation rather than a revelation. And this faith I have tried to hammer into those Socialists of my generation whom I have come across. But it's sometimes hard. The prejudices of the clever are harder to kill than those of the dull. Also I sometimes wonder whether this Commercialism, or Competition, or whatever the filthy infection is, hasn't spread almost too far, and whether the best hope isn't in some kind of upheaval."

All this is supplemented in an account written by Hugh Dalton, an intimate friend of this time. "During our years at Cambridge, Fabianism was at its high tide, and attracted most of those who had any social enthusiasm worth speaking of. Rupert joined the C.U.F.S. in April, 1907. He came to me, I remember, and said, 'I'm not your sort of Socialist; I'm a William Morris sort of Socialist, but I want to join your Society as an Associate.' He became a full member a year later. Like many of us, he was falling by then under the subtle influence of the Webbs, and

simultaneously the atmosphere of Cambridge was teaching him to value and to cultivate lucidity of thought and precision of reasoning. He soon saw the intellectual limitations of a 'William Morris sort of Socialist,' and though he never studied the fine points of economics, he came to talk very good sense on the larger economic questions.

"It was through the meetings of the *Carbonari* that I first came to know him well. This was a society of our contemporaries in King's, about a dozen, which we formed in our first term for papers and discussions. Rupert and I and one or two others were generally the last to separate, and sometimes the dawn was in the sky before we got to bed. We walked round the Courts and beside the river for hours, trying to get things clear. For we wanted, half passionately and half humorously, to get everything clear quickly. Hitherto, we thought, we had been too young to think, and soon we might be too busy, and ultimately we should be too old. The golden time was now.

" 'There are only three things in the world,' he said once, vehemently answering some Carbonaro who had been talking like a Philistine, 'one is to read poetry, another is to write poetry, and the best of all is to live poetry!' And I remember his saying that at rare moments he had glimpses

of what poetry really meant, how it solved all problems of conduct and settled all questions of values. Moreover, it kept men young, he thought. One night we were sitting at a high window overlooking King's Parade. We had been discussing some philosophical point about the nature of Beauty, when we saw and heard some drunken members of another college going home. 'Those fellows,' he said, 'would think us very old if they had been in this room to-night, but when they go down and sit on office stools, *they* will grow old quite suddenly, and many years hence *we* shall still be talking and thinking about these sorts of things, and we shall still be young.'

"As for philosophy, he shared the general view of the set in which we moved that ethics were exceedingly important, but metaphysics rather trivial; that it mattered immensely what was good, but comparatively little what was real. I remember several fierce arguments [1] as to whether a man's character, as distinct from the series of states of mind through which he passed, could be good in itself, and also a controversy as to whether states of affairs, as distinct from the states of mind of the persons concerned in them, could be good in themselves. Rupert maintained that

[1] *Argument,* it will be remembered, at Youth's Funeral, was 'too full of woe to speak.'

Variety was good in itself. 'A world containing you and me and Maynard Keynes,' he said, 'is obviously better than a world containing three people exactly like any one of us!' "

One of the most significant and absorbing of his activities was the dramatic. Here I must quote from E. J. Dent's admirable record: "When I came back to Cambridge in the autumn of 1907, I soon became aware that a new spirit was making itself felt. Probably it was active in more ways than I was able to observe; but the first notable result of it was the performance of Marlowe's *Faustus* in November by a number of men who afterwards constituted themselves as the Marlowe Dramatic Society. The new spirit seemed to come partly from Rugby, partly from Bedales, and by an odd coincidence the two leaders, though not related, bore the same name: Rupert and Justin Brooke. It was a queer performance. The elder generation were scandalised almost before the play began: no scenery, only dingy green hangings, no music, no footlights, frequent 'black-outs,' no names of the actors printed. And all this in the A.D.C. Theatre, with its familiar portraits, its familiar memories! No wonder they were upset by it all. '*Faustus* isn't a play at all'—'absurd

for undergraduates to attempt tragedy'—'why didn't they get somebody with experience to coach them?'—'why do they act in the dark?'—'not always in very nice taste.' It was indeed a queer performance. Faustus looked absurdly young; Mephistopheles (Rupert), his face completely hidden by his cowl, generally turned his back to the audience, and spoke in a thick indistinct voice which often served merely as a background to the piercing whispers of the Master of ——, whose thirst for information was insatiable. But in spite of these things and many others, in spite of the tedious humour of the comic scenes, the play had a new spirit of its own. The tragic moments were genuinely moving. Crude, awkward, and amateurish as it all was, there was the spirit of true poetry about it. One felt that to these actors poetry was the greatest thing in life.

"The Marlowe group were inclined to be suspicious, perhaps not unjustly, of anyone who was a member of the Senate. But as I had been one of the few to admit themselves sincerely impressed by *Faustus,* I was occasionally allowed to hear news of their next project. Milton was to be commemorated in the summer,[1] and the young

[1] By this time the Authorities had come round to the Marlowe Society, and Christ's College bespoke a special performance of its *Comus* for their celebration of the Tercentenary.

poets were going to have a hand in it. Rupert was to be seen almost daily, I believe, in Room Theta, studying vast books on theatre-construction; a kind friend brought out for him his copy of the Trinity Milton facsimile, for the settling of points of textual criticism; and mysterious designs for costumes and scenery were handed round, in which wonderful effects *à la* Gordon Craig were to be obtained with scaffold poles.

"It is difficult to criticise *Comus,* or to write the history of its preparation. It had much the same faults and the same merits as *Faustus,* though on a larger scale. Rupert was not a good actor,[1] nor even a good speaker of verse. Yet I feel now that anyone who remembers *Comus,* and remembers it with ever so slight a sense of beauty, will think of Rupert as the central figure of it; and watching rehearsals daily, as I did, I felt that, however much his personal beauty might count for, it was his passionate devotion to the spirit of poetry that really gave *Comus* its peculiar and indescribable atmosphere.

"*Comus,* however unimportant to the world at large, did, in fact, mean a great deal for Rupert and his friends. It was the first time that he had

[1] He took the part of the Attendant Spirit. It is only fair to say that this view of his acting, or at any rate of his elocution, was far from universal.

had to bear the responsibility of a large undertaking, and he addressed himself to it in the spirit of a scholar. It deepened his sense of poetry, of drama, and of music; it made him develop an ideal continually present in his mind, even in later years, which gave solidity to his group, the ideal of Cambridge, of young Cambridge, as the source from which the most vital movements in literature, art, and drama, were to spring. *Comus* effected an intimate collaboration of all sorts of brains, and it effected especially a co-operation of men and women. Rupert was by no means the only remarkable person in the circle. He had, moreover, a power of making friends with women as well as with men, and although *Comus* was probably a symptom rather than a cause, it was from about that time that joint societies, such as the Heretics and the Fabians, began to make a new influence felt."

Rupert was knocked up by his exertions over *Comus*. He wrote from Rugby to Mrs. Cornford (then Miss Frances Darwin): "I went off without even saying good-bye or thank-you to people. My mother (I can plead) packed me up and snatched me here to sleep and recover. I am now convalescent, and can sit up and take a little warm milk-and-Tennyson. I feel a deserter; but I can always adduce the week when the Commit-

tee went to the seaside, and I faced the world and Albert's Artistic Temperament alone." [1]

He had written to his mother about this week, and about another matter. "Albert [Rutherston], who is painting our scenery, is staying with me. We paint in the theatre, 9 to 5 every day. I daub a little, but most of the time carry and empty pails, run errands, wind pulleys, etc. . . . I suppose you heard of the dreadful tragedy that happened last Saturday week—[Walter] Headlam's death? It was terribly sudden. He was about in King's all the week—kept the procession for the Chancellor's installation on Wednesday waiting for half an hour by being late—in his usual way! On Friday he was in King's, about, as usual. Friday evening he went up to town, had a slight operation (by some accounts), and died on Saturday morning. . . . It made me quite miserable and ill for some days. One gets so *angry* at that sort of thing. I didn't know him *very* well. But he was the one classic I really admired and liked;[2] and I had done a good deal of work with him. The papers made very little of it. He published so little that outside people

[1] It was at about this time that he bought two drawings by Augustus John, "very splendid ones—even the critical Albert admitted that, and confessed jealousy."

[2] It was not till later that he knew A. W. Verrall, whom he 'admired and liked' very much.

didn't know much of him. But his friends, and we who were his pupils, knew his great genius. I don't know how much of him they will be able to rake together from his papers. But all the great, ripe, splendid works we all proudly looked forward to him achieving—which we knew he might consummate any time he gave himself a few months, have died with him: can never be made. That's the terrible thing. Even in Cambridge many people knew of him most as a brilliant 'scholar,' *i. e.,* emender of Greek texts. But he was also about the best writer of Greek there has been since the Greeks. And what I loved so in him was his extraordinary and living appreciation of all English poetry, modern and ancient. To hear him repeat it was a delight. He was an excellent poet himself, and had perfect taste. He first inspired me with a desire to get *Comus* done, a term or two ago, and has often talked about it since. I had made up, in my mind, a little list of things about which I was going to ask him, large and small points, to make certain that we should interpret and understand it in the best way possible; but I put it off till too late. . . . The whole thing makes me so rebellious—to think what the world has lost."

. . . . . .

The vacations were spent in all sorts of ways: at the Fabian Summer School, or camping out with smaller groups of friends; on walking tours; or, at Christmas, with large heterogeneous parties for winter-sports in Switzerland. He told his mother of his plans for one of the Swiss excursions in the winter of 1908. "What I meant about the holidays is this. It is quite true that I have plenty of opportunities of resting. But I always feel that I oughtn't to, and can't, do nothing. There are so many things I must learn and do, and there is not too much time. My brain *must* be working. And so the only way (I find) I have a real holiday from my work, is on a walking-tour, or in Switzerland; times and places where it is impossible to think or read for more than five minutes. In a way such things are a waste of time. And I can't imagine anything I should hate more than a long 'holiday' like that, of more than a week or ten days. It would be intolerable. But, I think, just a week's mental rest strengthens a mind for some time. This sounds rather priggish; but I'm really very much in earnest about reading and writing."

The Swiss relaxations used to include the performance of a play, or even an opera—the *Importance of Being Earnest,* in which Rupert

played Algernon, or a nonsense-melodrama written in collaboration by the party, but mostly by him. In the opera he was obliged at the last moment, by the sudden defection of the tenor, to play the hero. He couldn't sing a note; and the difficulty was got over by making the actor who played his valet stand beside him in a rigid position and sing, while Rupert did the gestures.

The English holidays were more peaceful. "Overcote is a lovely place," he wrote to his mother on one of them, "with nothing but an old inn, and a ferry. There are villages round, a mile or two away, but hidden. And there's just the Ouse, a slow stream, and some trees and fields, and an immense expanse of sky. There were a lot of wild birds about, wild duck, and snipe, and herons."

All these occasions produced floods of doggerel, some of which is amusing—from a snatch of blank verse on an unfortunate town-bred friend who arrived late on a wet night at a camp where all the beds were occupied, and didn't rise to the occasion:

> In the late evening he was out of place,
> And infinitely irrelevant at dawn,

—to the following elaborate ballade, composed during a sleepless night when he and Dudley Ward,[1] coming very late into Cranborne, couldn't find the inn which they had picked out in the guide-book for the sake of its name:

In Cranborne town two inns there are,
  And one the Fleur-de-Lys is hight,
And one, the inn Victoria,[2]
  Where, for it was alone in sight,
  We turned in tired and tearful plight
Seeking for warmth, and company,
  And food, and beds so soft and white—
These things are at the Fleur-de-Lys.

Where is the ointment for the scar?
  Slippers? and table deftly dight?
Sofas? tobacco? soap? and ah!
  Hot water for a weary wight?
  Where is the food, in toil's despite?
The golden eggs? the toast? the tea?
  The maid so pretty and polite?
These things are at the Fleur-de-Lys.

Oh, we have wandered far and far,
  We are fordone and wearied quite.
No lamp is lit; there is no star.
  Only we know that in the night
  We somewhere missed the faces bright,

[1] A Cambridge friend, not to be confused with the Member of Parliament of the same name.

[2] Showing that a Grantchester man can make cockney rhymes just like a Barton man.

The lips and eyes we longed to see;
  And Love, and Laughter, and Delight.
These things are at the Fleur-de-Lys.

Prince, it is dark to left and right.
  Waits there an inn for you and me?
Fine noppy ale and red firelight?
  These things are at the Fleur-de-Lys.

The next was written at a very favourite inn, the *Pink and Lily,* near Prince's Risborough, on one occasion when he went there with Jacques Raverat.

Never came there to the Pink
Two such men as we, I think.
Never came there to the Lily
Two men quite so richly silly;[1]
So broad, so supple, and so tall,
So modest and so brave withal,
With hearts so clear, such noble eyes,
Filled with such sage philosophies,
Thirsty for Good, seeure of Truth,
Fired by a purer flame than youth,
Serene as age, but not so dirty,
Old, young, mature, being under thirty.
Were ever two so fierce and strong,
Who drank so deep, and laughed so long,
So proudly meek, so humbly proud,
Who walked so far, and sang so loud?

[1] This couplet, which is inconsistent with the rest, was supplied by his companion.

The last I will quote was pinned to some food which they left by the roadside after luncheon:

> Two men left this bread and cake
> For whomsoever finds to take.
> He and they will soon be dead.
> Pray for them that left this bread.

. . . . . .

From this time the story shall be told as far as possible in extracts from Rupert Brooke's letters to his friends, from which his character will appear far more vividly, and on the whole more clearly, than from anything that could be written about it. But the picture thus given must for various reasons be incomplete, and perhaps misleading; and a few touches must here be added, to be borne in mind while the letters are read.

They might, for instance, give the idea of self-absorption. Self-conscious he was, self-examining, and self-critical, to the last degree; but hardly ever self-absorbed. The extracts cannot show his continual helpfulness and serviceableness to his friends, both in large matters which are too private, and in details which are too trivial, to be chronicled. "There was a deep-seated generosity in him," says Mrs. Cornford, "at once sensible and tender. I used to think that the real reason the charm of his face struck peo-

ple so greatly was because its clearness and fairness were not simply a happy accident of youth, but expressed this innate quality in him. . . . He was endlessly kind in helping me with my verses (except that kindness seems the wrong word, because he did it as a matter of course). He would sit for an hour or two at a time, generally on the ground, frowning and biting the end of his pencil and scribbling little notes on the margin before we talked. Of the better things he would only say 'I like that,' or 'That's good.' I can't imagine him using a word of that emotional jargon in which people usually talk or write of poetry. He made it feel more like carpentering." Here we see him as he often was, just simple and serious, full of the business of the moment. Indeed he was very restful to be with. The eager, working, excited brain which shows in the letters, incessantly registering, assimilating, juggling with, sensations and impressions, hid its thrills under an appearance almost of placidity. He never 'put himself forward,' and seldom took the lead, in conversation; someone spoke of 'the beauty of his eyes looking steadily and without mocking into quite ordinary talk.' But he was 'noticing' all the time; he had the power which women are supposed to have of knowing everything that is

going on in the room; and he seemed never to forget the smallest detail.

His observation was always, if not 'mocking,' at any rate amused; and something must be said about the peculiar quality of his irony and his humour, which were very intimate, and might be misunderstood by strangers. J. T. Sheppard has written admirably about them, as they played on his friends. "He would laugh at them, and sometimes treat their most cherished enthusiasms as amusing, if harmless foibles; but he had not the power, possessed by some people who matter less, of making you seem small and dull. His society was, in the good sense, comfortable. He loved children, and when he treated his grown-up friends as rather absurd but very nice children, they would have had to be very absurd indeed to resent it. It must have been very hard to be pompous or priggish in his company." He treated himself in much the same way. If there was any fun to be got out of a laugh against him, far from grudging it, he gave every facility; but he liked to have the first go at it himself. There was always some foundation for the jokes; but the truth and the fun were inextricably mixed up, and one had to know exactly how many grains of salt to take. As an obvious instance: it was certainly his usual belief that he was, or at any

rate had it in him to be, a good poet; and so he would describe himself as the first poet of the age, because it *would* be funny if he thought so, and therefore it was amusing to say so; and there was no risk of his correspondents thinking him cocksure. In the same way he would pick out his best lines for special praise. "There's one *superb* line," he said to me when he first showed me the sonnet *Love*. " 'Astonishment is no more in hand or shoulder.' Isn't it amazing?" He did think it good, and was enjoying what Keats calls 'the reperception and ratification of what is fine' in his own work; but he said it with a twinkle.

He always loved to dramatise a situation, and to make out that he had said or done something absurdly striking and stunning. Here is a good illustration from a letter of 1909: "And so I walked and laughed and met a many people and made a thousand songs—all very good—and, in the end of the days, came to a woman who was more glorious than the sun, and stronger and stranger than the sea, and kinder than the earth, who is a flower made out of fire, a star that laughs all day, whose brain is clean and clear like a man's, and her heart is full of courage and kindness; and whom I love. I told her that the Earth was crowned with windflowers, and dancing down the violet ways of Spring; that Christ had died and

Pan was risen; that her mouth was like the sunlight on a gull's wings. As a matter of fact I believe I said 'Hullo! isn't it rippin' weather?' "

"You are the only person, Frances," he wrote much later to Mrs. Cornford, "who ever believed *all* my lies. Nothing (short, perhaps, of incredulity) can shake my devotion to you."

One more quotation from Sheppard: "He was kind and unaffected. But he was not miraculously unselfish, nor indifferent to his popularity. The fact that in small things he sometimes seemed to choose the pleasant second-best, and, as he himself realised, rather eagerly to accept the little successes which he could so easily win, should make us appreciate not less, but more, the rightness and the goodness of his larger choices. He was very sensitive to praise, and it would be wrong to say that he was always wisely praised. But he was sensible enough and strong enough to take flattery, in the long run, for what it was worth; and he valued the affection that was critical, not flattering.

"Because he was human, he enjoyed his popularity. The quality which won it was, I think, his power of liking people, and making them feel, because he liked them all, not only at their ease with him, but also happy and friendly with one another. His company had this effect at home,

and in his rooms at King's, in his garden at Grantchester, in London, and I am sure wherever he went in Germany and in America. Certainly the most varied people used to delight in it, and he, for his part, was delighted when some of the incongruous persons he liked, unexpectedly also liked one another.

"He was in some ways like a child, very frank and simple, generally knowing what he wanted, and, if he could see it, taking it; but also, where his affections were concerned, most loyal and devoted; suffering acutely in the few great troubles that came to him, but generally confident and happy; above all delighting, and making other people share his delight, in a great number of different things."

III

He took the Classical Tripos in the summer of 1909, only getting a Second. This was a 'disappointment,' though not specially so to him. "He found English literature, now, for him, more important than the ancient classics; and he has convinced us all that he was right," says Sheppard, himself a Don at King's; so there is no need for head-shaking.

After term, he went to live within easy dis-

tance of Cambridge, at a house in Grantchester called the Orchard. Here he spent most of the rest of this year, going for the summer holidays to a vicarage his parents had taken at Clevedon in Somerset, which he was allowed to cram with relays of his friends. He was working all these months for the Charles Oldham Shakespeare prize, which he won in the course of the Michaelmas Term.

He went to Switzerland for Christmas, where he got poisoned by drinking some bad water; and he came home to find his father seriously ill with hemorrhage on the brain. He had to give up Grantchester and Cambridge and all his plans for next term, and undertake the temporary management of the House at Rugby. He wrote to Mrs. Cornford to apologise for backing out of his part in *The Land of Heart's Desire*. "There are other things I'm very sick to miss," he went on: "the Marlowe play, and Verrall's lectures, etc.—seeing you all—the whole life of it, in fact. Also I fear I may have confused the Fabians rather by not coming up. I'm a general nuisance. Oh! and I'm so sad and fierce and miserable not to be in my garden and little house at Grantchester all this term. I love being there so much —more than any place I've ever lived in. I love the place and especially the solitude so much. I'd

thought of being there when the spring was coming, every day this winter, and dreamt of seeing all the little brown and green things. It's horrible of me to talk like this when I'm in the house with two other people who are infinitely worse off in happiness than I am, and one of them in pain. . . . Many thanks for your letter, by the way. It cheered me greatly at the exact time when I was sitting gloomily waiting for my father's return from the London doctor, and wondering what the verdict would be. I had sunk into that abysmal darkness which comes on a convalescent when anything goes wrong. I've shaken off my dreadful disease now. It inspired me with thousands of Hardyesque short poems about people whose affairs went dismally wrong, or frightfully detestable people I couldn't help falling in love with, or interviews with the Almighty in which He turned out to be an absolute and unimaginative idiot. . . . But I hope to occupy my exile by composing some work of immortal genius."

A little later Mr. Brooke died suddenly, and was buried on the very day when the fifty boys were coming back to School Field. The shock was great. Rupert wrote to me in March, thanking me for a letter, "and indeed for the earlier ones to an invalid—though those seem so long

ago that I cannot find continuity between that time and this. It is the smallest part of the gulf that I have been ill again—I collapsed, unforgivably [with influenza], just after the funeral; and again subsisted for days on milk and the pieces I could surreptitiously bite out of the end of my thermometer. Now, and lately, though, I am well and bursting with activity. I work like a Professor, and feel the Spring in my bones. I am acting Housemaster in my father's place till the end of the term. Then we are to be turned from this place by cold strangers, into a little house with a patch of grass in front, on a road, stiff and ugly. . . . I find I am an admirable schoolmaster. I have a bluff Christian tone that is wholly pedagogic. Also, they remember I used to play for the School at various violent games, and respect me accordingly."

"My heart is warm," he wrote to Jacques Raverat, "and has been half secure—or confident, rather—throughout the last four centuries (just a month) because of the splendid people I know. Half are scattered abroad now. But you'll all meet in April. I'll find all of you by August."

Some of them he did meet in April, when he wrote to me from Lulworth: "At length I am escaped from the world's great snare. This is heaven. Downs, Hens, Cottages, and the Sun.

. . . For the rest of Eternity my stabile address is 24 Bilton Road, Rugby. School Field, that palatial building, will know us no more. And henceforth I shall have to play on other people's tennis lawns. I wept copiously last week on saying good-bye to the three and fifty little boys whose Faith and Morals I had upheld for ten weeks. I found I had fallen in love with them all. They were so pleasant and fresh-minded as they were. And it filled me with purpureal gloom to know that their plastic souls would harden into the required shapes, and they would go to swell the indistinguishable masses who fill Trinity Hall, Clare, Caius . . . and at last become members of the English Upper, or Upper Middle, Classes. I am glad I am not going to be a schoolmaster for ever. The tragedy would be too great."

He went back to Grantchester for most of the May term, and immediately got caught up again in the multiplicity of Cambridge life. "I'm afraid there isn't the ghost of a chance," he wrote in answer to a suggestion that we should go abroad together for a fortnight. "I'm so extraordinarily inextricable and necessary! You think this conceit; but it's not. Various bodies and societies have arranged things in which I am continuously and hopelessly involved. Also my labours at the

University Library press most insistently upon me. I wish I could have come, it would have been lovely. Grantchester's lovely though, too. When are you coming? The apple-blossom and the river and the sunsets have combined to make me relapse into a more than Wordsworthian communion with nature, which prevents me reading more than 100 lines a day, or thinking at all."

His work at this time was on the Elizabethan drama, mainly for a monograph on 'Puritanism as represented or referred to in the early English drama up to 1642,' with which he won the Harness Prize this year.[1] It shows deep reading. "I read 20 pre-Elizabethan plays a week, all poor," he had written in March; and in April from Lulworth, "All the morning I souse myself in Elizabethan plays; and every afternoon I walk up perpendicular places alone, for hours"—adding in a moment of surfeit, "There are no good plays between 1500 and 1650, except the *Faithful Shepherdess*—and, perhaps, *Antony and Cleopatra*."

By this time he had already written a good many of the poems which were to appear in the 1908-1911 section of his first book, and he was writing more. "I am slowly recovering from

[1] A copy of this essay is in the British Museum Library.

Work," he wrote to Mrs. Cornford. "Henceforth I am going to lead what Dudley calls 'a Life Dedicated to Art.' Hurray!" Mrs. Cornford and he both had plans for publishing a volume of poems in 1910—(hers was carried out, his postponed). "They will review us together!" he told her. "The *Daily Chronicle,* or some such, that reviews verse in lumps, will notice thirty-four minor poets in one day, ending with *Thoughts in Verse on many Occasions, by a Person of Great Sensibility,* by F. Cornford, and *Dead Pansy-Leaves, and other Flowerets,* by R. Brooke; and it will say, 'Mr. Cornford has some pretty thoughts; but Miss Brooke is always intolerable' (they always guess the sex wrong). And then I shall refuse to call on you. Or another paper will say, 'Major Cornford and the Widow Brooke are both bad; but Major Cornford is the worst.' And then you will cut me in the street."

The Marlowe Society's second performance of *Dr. Faustus,* got up for a party of fifty German students who visited Cambridge in August, was one excitement of this summer; and another was a tour with Dudley Ward in a disreputable-looking caravan, to popularise the Minority Report on the Poor Law in the principal towns on the South Coast—except Bournemouth, through

which they drove, bare-headed and barefoot, at full speed, in fear or hope of being seen by a Conservative aunt who lived there.

Next month he wrote to F. H. Keeling[1] from Rugby. The letter is dated September 20th-23rd, 1910: "I've several times started to write you a notable and rhetorical letter, but my life has been too jerky to admit of much connected thought lately, so the letter always fizzled away, and was not. I'm sorry I didn't write sooner, but I wanted to be able to write down a great attack on your pessimism in abundant and reasoned language. And such a thing takes time and thought. Also, I may agree with you.

"What is pessimism? Why do you say you are becoming a pessimist? What does it mean? He may (I say to myself) mean that he thinks that the Universe is bad as a whole, or that it's bad just now, or that, more locally and importantly, things aren't going to get any better in our time and our country, no matter how much we preach Socialism and clean hearts at them.

"Is it the last two? Are you telling us that the world is, after all, bad, and, what's more horrible, without enough seeds of good in it? I, writing

[1] F. H. Keeling, or as he was always called by his friends, 'Ben' Keeling, the chief figure among the Cambridge Fabians of Rupert's day, was killed in the Somme Battle of 1916.

poetry and reading books and living at Grantchester all day, feel rather doubtful and ignorant about 'the world'—about England, and men, and what they're like. Still, I see some, besides the University gang. I see all these queer provincials in this town, upper and middle and lower class, and God knows they're sterile enough.

"But I feel a placid and healthy physician about it all (only I don't know what drugs to recommend). This is because I've such an overflowing (if intermittent) flood of anti-pessimism in me. I'm using the word now in what I expect is its most important sense, of a feeling rather than a reasoned belief. The horror is not in *believing* the Universe is bad—or even believing the world won't improve—on a reasoned and cool examination of all facts, tendencies and values, so much as in a sort of general *feeling* that there isn't much potentiality for good in the world, and that anyhow it's a fairly dreary business,—an absence of much appreciation and hope, and a somehow paralysed will for good. As this is a feeling, it *may* be caused by reason and experience, or more often by loneliness or soul-measles or indigestion or age or anything else. And it can equally be cured by other things than reason —by energy or weather or good people, as well as by a wider ethical grasp. At least, so I've

found in the rather slight and temporary fits of depression I've had, in exile or otherwise, lately —or even in an enormous period of Youthful Tragedy with which I started at Cambridge. I have a remedy. It is a dangerous one, but I think very good on the whole; though it may lead to a sterile but ecstatic content, or even to the asylum. In practice, I find, it doesn't—or hasn't yet—make me inefficient. (I am addressing an Adult School on Sunday. I have started a group for studying the Minority Report here. I am going to Cambridge in a week to oversee, with the light of pure reason, the powerful energies of those who are setting forth the new Fabian Rooms,—and later, to put the rising generation, Fabian and otherwise, on the way of Light, all next term.)

"The remedy is Mysticism, or Life, I'm not sure which. Do not leap or turn pale at the word Mysticism, I do not mean any religious thing, or any form of belief. I still burn and torture Christians daily. It is merely the *feeling*—or a kindred one—which underlay the mysticism of the wicked mystics, only I refuse to be cheated by the *feeling* into any kind of *belief*. They were convinced by it that the world was very good, or that the Universe was one, or that God existed. I don't any the more believe the world

to be good. Only I do get rid of the despair that it isn't—and I certainly seem to see additional possibilities of its getting better.

"It consists in just looking at people and things as themselves—neither as useful nor moral nor ugly nor anything else; but just as being. At least, that's a philosophical description of it. What happens is that I suddenly feel the extraordinary value and importance of everybody I meet, and almost everything I see. In *things* I am moved in this way especially by some things; but in people by almost all people. That is, when the mood is on me. I roam about places —yesterday I did it even in Birmingham!—and sit in trains and see the essential glory and beauty of all the people I meet. I can watch a dirty middle-aged tradesman in a railway-carriage for hours, and love every dirty greasy sulky wrinkle in his weak chin and every button on his spotted unclean waistcoat. I know their states of mind are bad. But I'm so much occupied with their being there at all, that I don't have time to think of that. I tell you that a Birmingham gouty Tariff Reform fifth-rate business man is splendid and immortal and desirable.

"It's the same about the things of ordinary life. Half an hour's roaming about a street or village or railway-station shows so much beauty

that it's impossible to be anything but wild with suppressed exhilaration. And it's not only beauty and beautiful things. In a flicker of sunlight on a blank wall, or a reach of muddy pavement, or smoke from an engine at night, there's a sudden significance and importance and inspiration that makes the breath stop with a gulp of certainty and happiness. It's not that the wall or the smoke seem important for anything, or suddenly reveal any general statement, or are rationally seen to be good or beautiful in themselves,—only that *for you* they're perfect and unique. It's like being in love with a person. One doesn't (nowadays, and if one's clean-minded) think the person better or more beautiful or larger than the truth. Only one is extraordinarily excited that the person, exactly as he is, uniquely and splendidly just exists. It's a feeling, not a belief. Only it's a feeling that has amazing results. I suppose my occupation is being in love with the universe—or (for it's an important difference), with certain spots and moments and points of it.

"I wish to God I could express myself. I have a vague notion that this is all very incoherent. But the upshot of it is that one's too happy to *feel* pessimistic; and too much impressed by the immense value and potentialities of everything to

believe in pessimism—for the following reason, and in the following sense. Every action, one knows (as a good Determinist), has an eternal effect. And every action, therefore, which leads on the whole to good, is *'frightfully'* important. For the good mystic knows how jolly 'good' is. It is not a question of either getting to Utopia in the year 2000, or not. There'll be so much good then, and so much evil. And we can affect it. There—from the purely rational point of view—is the beginning and end of the whole matter. It oughtn't to make any difference to our efforts whether the good in 2000 A.D. will be a lot greater than it is now, or a little greater, or less. In any case, the amount of good we can cause by doing something, or can subtract by not doing it, remains about the same. And that is all that ought to matter.

"Lately, when I've been reading up the Elizabethans, and one or two other periods, I've been amazed more than ever at the way things change. Even in talking to my uncle of seventy about the Victorians, it comes out astoundingly. The whole machinery of life, and the minds of every class and kind of man, change beyond recognition every generation. I don't know that 'Progress' is certain. All I know is that change is. These solid solemn provincials, and old maids,

and business men, and all the immovable system of things I see round me, will vanish like smoke. All this present overwhelming reality will be as dead and odd and fantastic as crinolines, or 'a dish of tay.' Something will be in its place, inevitably. And what that something will be, depends on me. With such superb work to do, and with the wild adventure of it all, and with the other minutes (too many of them) given to the enchantment of being even for a moment alive in a world of real matter (not that imitation, gilt, stuff one gets in Heaven) and actual people,—I have no time now to be a pessimist.

"I don't know why I have scribbled down these thin insane vapourings. I don't suppose you're still as desperate as you were when you wrote in June. When are you coming to Cambridge? I am going to Germany for the spring term. But if you can get there next term, are you coming out to stay at Grantchester? I lead a lovely and dim and rustic life there, and have divine food. Hugh is going to be in London, and —— is old as the hills and withered as a spider, and I am the oldest Fabian left (except ——, who is senile), and I dodder about and smile with toothless gums on all the gay young sparks of the Fabian Society, to whom I am more than a father.

"So you might tell me if you are going to shake off for a day or a month the ghastly coils of British Family Life and of Modern Industry that you are wound in, and come to see the bovine existence of a farmer.

"In the name of God and the Republic,

RUPERT."

The next event was a journey on the Continent at the beginning of 1911. He conceived romantic plans for it, as appears in the latter part of this letter to Geoffrey Fry, written before he started, to thank for a present of Mr. Bullen's Elizabethan Songbooks: "I read them when I ought to be learning German, and I writhe with vain passion and with envy. How did they do it? Was it, as we're told, because they always wrote to tunes? The lightness! There are moments when I try to write 'songs', 'where Lumpkin with his Giles hobnobs', but they are bumping rustic guffaws. I feel that sense of envious incompetence and a vast angry clumsiness that hippopotamuses at the Zoo must feel when you stand before them with your clouded cane and take snuff. They're occasionally—the songbooks, not the hippopotamuses—so like the Anthology, and oh! I can see why Headlam loved them.

"I may see you yet in England. For I don't go till January 8 or so. But when I do go, aha! England will never see me more. I shall grow my red whiskers and take to Art. In a few years you may come and stay with me in my villa at Sybaris, or my palace near Smyrna, or my tent at Kandahar, or my yacht off the Cyclades. But you will be a respectable lawyer. You will waggle your pince-nez and lecture me on my harem. Then a large one-eyed negro Eunuch will come and tie you up and pitch you into the sea. And I shall continue to paint sea-scapes in scarlet and umber."

These dreams were not realised. He began his travels with three months in Munich, where he wrote to Mrs. Cornford in the middle of February: "The worst of solitude—or the best—is, that one begins poking at his own soul, examining it, cutting the soft and rotten parts away. And where's one to stop? Have you ever had, at lunch or dinner, an over-ripe pear or apple, and, determined to make the best of it, gone on slicing off the squashy bits? You may imagine me, in München, at a German lunch with Life, discussing hard, and cutting away at the bad parts of the dessert. 'Oh!' says Life, courteous as ever, 'I'm sure you've got a bad soul there. Please don't go on with it! Leave it, and take

another! I'm so sorry!' But, knowing I've taken the last, and polite anyhow, 'Oh, no, *please!*' I say, scraping away. 'It's really all right. It's only a little gone, here and there, on the outside. There's plenty that's quite good. I'm quite enjoying it. You always have such delightful souls!' . . . And after a minute, when there's a circle of messy brown rounding my plate, and in the centre a rather woe-begone brown-white thin shapeless scrap, the centre of the thing, Life breaks in again, seeing my plight. —'Oh, but you can't touch any of that! It's bad right through! I'm sure Something must have got in to it! Let me ring for another! There's sure to be some in the larder.' . . . But it won't do, you know. So I rather ruefully reply, 'Ye-es, I'm afraid it *is* impossible. But I won't have another, thanks. I don't really want one at all. I only took it out of mere greed, and to have something to do. Thank you, I've had quite enough—such excellent meat and pudding! I've done splendidly—BUT TO GO ON WITH OUR CONVERSATION ABOUT LITERATURE,—YOU WERE SAYING, I THINK . . .?' and so the incident's at an end.

"Dear! dear! it's very trying being so exalted one day and ever so desperate the next—this Self-knowledge (*why* did that old fool class it

with Self-reverence and Self-control? They're rarely seen together!) But so one lives in Munich.

"—And then your letter came! So many thanks. It made me shake with joy to know that Cambridge and England (as I know it) was all as fine as ever. That Jacques and Ka should be sitting in a café, looking just like themselves —oh God! what an incredibly lovely superb world. I fairly howled my triumph down the ways of this splendid city. 'Oh! you fat, muddy-faced, grey, jolly Germans who despise me because I don't know your rotten language! Oh! the people I know, and you don't! Oh! you poor things!' And they all growl at me because they don't know why I glory over them. But, of course, part of the splendour is that—if they only knew it—they too, these Germans, are all sitting in cafés and looking just like themselves. That knowledge sets me often dreaming in a vague, clerical, world-misty spirit over my solitary coffee, in one of the innumerable cafés here in which I spend my days. I find myself smiling a dim, gentle, poetic, paternal, Jehovah-like smile—over the ultimate excellence of humanity —at people of, obviously, the most frightful lives and reputations at other tables; who come presently sidling towards me. My mysticism van-

ishes, and in immense terror I fly suddenly into the street.

"Oh, but they're a kindly people. Every night I sit in a café near here, after the opera, and read the day-old *Times* (!) and drink—prepare to hear the depths of debauchery into which the young are led in these wicked foreign cities!—HOT MILK, a large glassful. Last night I spilt the whole of the hot milk over myself, while I was trying to negotiate the Literary Supplement. You've no idea how much of one a large glass of hot milk will cover. I was entirely white, except for my scarlet face. All the people in the café crowded round and dabbed me with dirty pocket-handkerchiefs. A kindly people. Nor did I give in. I ordered more hot milk and finished my Supplement, damp but International.

"No! Cambridge isn't very dim and distant, nor Dent a pink shade. I somehow manage, these days, to be aware of two places at once. I used to find it wasn't worth while; and to think that the great thing was to let go completely of a thing when you've done with it, and turn wholly and freshly to the next. 'Being able to take and to let go and to take, and knowing when to take and when to let go, and knowing that life's this—is the only way to happiness' is the burden of the

Marschallin in the *Rosencavalier* (the rage of Germany just now). There's some truth in it. But sometimes, now, I find I can weave two existences together and enjoy both, and be aware of the unique things of each. It's true that as I write there's an attitude of Jacques's, or a slow laugh of Ka's, or a moon at Grantchester, or a speech of Dickinson's, that I'd love, and that I'm missing. But there'll be other such, no doubt, in May and June—and what if I'd not met the lovable Mr. Leuba (and so differently lovable from an English unsuccessful journalist!) or the fascinating Miss Something or Other of Paris, or the interesting and wicked di Ravelli, or Dr. Wolfskell who is shy and repeats Swinburne in large quantities with a villainous German accent but otherwise knows no English, or that bearded man in the café, or the great Hegedus, or Professor Sametscu? . . .

"Eh, but I have grown clerical and solemn and moral. That is because I've been seeing so much Ibsen lately. I apologise. I'm old-fashioned enough to admire that man vastly. I've seen five or six of his plays in four weeks. They always leave me prostrate.

"No, I've not yet been proposed to by young ladies in plaid blouses, not even one at a time. As a matter of fact I know only one or two

such. Most of the people I see are working at some sensible thing like writing, music, or painting, and are free and comradely. I made one or two incursions into Anglo-German Philistia, and came hurriedly forth. I'm damnably sorry for the plaid blouses (who *do* exist there, and are, at present, so much better than their mothers). I saw two stifling and crying. But I'm not going back to rescue them.

"But in ordinary, and nicer, ways, I meet a lot of jolly people. It's true, a lot, I think, what you say about friends; but oh, dear people! it *is* fun going away and making thousands of acquaintances.

"I finish this tourist's effusion at 2 o' the morning, sitting up in bed, with my army blanket round me. My feet, infinitely disconnected, and southward, inform me that to-night it is freezing again. The bed is covered with Elizabethan and German books I may or may not read ere I sleep. In the distance glimmers the gaunt white menacing Ibsenite stove that casts a gloom over my life. The Algerian dancing-master next door is, for once, quiet. I rather think the Dragon overhead (the Dragon = that monstrous, tired-faced, screeching, pouchy creature, of infinite age and horror, who screams opposite me at dinner and talks with great crags of food

projecting from her mouth; a decayed Countess, they say) is snoring.

"Oh, I sometimes make a picture of Conduit Head, with Jacques in a corner, and Gwen on other cushions, and Justin on his back, and Ka on a footstool, and Francis smoking, and Frances in the chair to the right (facing the fire). . . . It stands out against the marble of the Luitpold Café and then fades. . . . But say it's true!

"Even with an enormous stomach and a beard and in Munich.—Yours, RUPERT."

From Munich he went to join his godfather, Mr. Robert Whitelaw, in Florence, where he wrote to me at the end of April: "I led a most noisome life in Munich, crawling about in trams, and eating, and sleeping. I never thought, and barely ever read. I worked hard in an intermittent doleful way, but never accomplished anything. I spent two months over a poem that describes the feelings of a fish, in the metre of *L'Allegro*. It was meant to be a lyric, but has turned into a work of 76 lines with a moral end. It's quite unintelligible. Beyond that I have written one or two severe and subtle sonnets in my most modern manner—descriptions of very poignant and complicated situations in the life

of to-day, thrilling with a false simplicity. The one beginning

'I did not think you thought I knew you knew'

has created a sensation in English-speaking circles in Munich.

"I have sampled and sought out German culture. It has changed all my political views. I am wildly in favour of nineteen new Dreadnoughts. German culture must never, never prevail! The Germans are nice, and well-meaning, and they try; but they are SOFT. Oh! they *are* soft! The only good things (outside music perhaps) are the writings of Jews who live in Vienna. Have you ever heard of Mr. Schnitzler's historical play? They act an abbreviated version which lasts from 7 to 12. I saw it. A Hebrew journalist's version of the *Dynasts,* but rather good.

"Here I live in a *pension* surrounded by English clergymen and ladies. They are all Forster characters. Perhaps it is his pension.[1] But to live among Forster characters is too bewildering. The 'quaint' remarks fall all round one during meal-times, with little soft plups like pats of butter. 'So strong,' they said, next to me, at the concert last night, of the Fifth Symphony; 'and

[1] See E. M. Forster's "A Room with a View."

yet so restful, my dear! not at all what I should call *morbid,* you know!' Just now the young parson and his wife, married a fortnight, have been conversing. 'Are you ready to kick off?' he said. How extraordinary! What does it mean? I *gathered* it merely meant was she dressed for San Lorenzo. But does the Church talk like that nowadays?

"So I am seeing life. But I am thirsting for Grantchester. I am no longer to be at *The Orchard,* but next door at *The Old Vicarage,* with a wonderful garden. I shall fly from Florence, which is full of painstaking ugly pictures. But before I go I've got to settle the question, 'Shall I lay a handful of roses on Mrs. Browning's grave? and, if so, how many?' These literary problems are dreadful. And the English Cemetery is so near!"

"It's very late," he wrote one evening to the Raverats. "The stars over Fiesole are wonderful; and there are quiet cypresses and a straight white wall opposite. I renounce England; though at present I've the senile affection of a godfather for it. I think of it, over there (beyond even Fiesole)—Gwen and Jacques and Ka and Frances and Justin and Dudley, and Dr. Verrall and the Master, and Lord Esher and Mr. Balfour. Good-night, children."

IV

The Old Vicarage, which was his home in 1911, is a long, low, ramshackle, tumble-down one-storied house, with attics in a high roof, and a verandah. It has a profuse, overgrown, sweet-smelling, 'most individual and bewildering' garden, with random trees and long grass, and here and there odd relics of the eighteenth century, a sundial sticking out from the dried-up basin of a round pond, and an imitation ruin in a corner. Towards the end of the year it is a little melancholy. "The garden," he wrote in September, "is immeasurably autumnal, sad, mysterious, august. I walk in it feeling like a fly crawling on the score of the Fifth Symphony"; and in December he called it a House of Usher. But in summer it's a paradise of scent and colour. "You'll find me quite wild with reading and the country," he wrote in an invitation. "Come prepared for bathing, and clad in primitive clothes. Bring books also: one talks eight hours, reads eight, and sleeps eight."

Here is a morning of about this time, in a letter to Miss Katherine Cox: "I worked till 1, and then ran nearly to Haslingfield and back before lunch, thinking over the next bits. There

was such clearness and frosty sun. Some men under a haystack, eating their lunch, shouted how fine a day it was. I shouted back it was very cold; and ran on. They roared with laughter and shouted after me that with that fine crop of hair I oughtn't to be cold. . . . It was wonderful and very clean out there. I thought of all you Londoners, dirty old drivellers! Now I'm come in to rehearse my nigger part [as a super in the *Magic Flute*] and to work. I've realised that taking part in theatrical performances is the only thing worth doing. And it's so *very* nice being an intelligent subordinate. I'm a very good subordinate—it's such a test. I'm thought not to dance well: but my intelligence and devotion have brought me rapidly to the front. I am now the most important of 7 negroes!"

He was now working at the first draft of his dissertation on John Webster, which he sent in at the end of the year. "I've wallowed in Webster-Texts all day," he wrote in September. "If only I didn't want, at the same time, to be reading everything else in the world, I should be infinitely happy." He didn't get the Fellowship till next year.

He was also preparing the book of *Poems* which Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson published in December. It had a mixed reception, both from

his friends and from the critics. I was lucky enough to take it in a way which pleased him; and he rewarded me with the following letter, which is too informing to be left out, though I would rather it fell to someone else to print it: "Your letter gave me great joy. I horribly feel that degrading ecstasy that I have always despised in parents whose shapeless offspring are praised for beauty. People are queer about my poems. Some that I know very well and have great *sympathie* with, don't like them. Some people seem to like them. Some like only the early ones—them considerably, but the others not at all. These rather sadden me. I hobnob vaguely with them over the promising verses of a young poet, called Rupert Brooke, who died in 1908. But I'm so much more concerned with the living, who doesn't interest them. God! it's so cheering to find someone who likes the modern stuff, and appreciates what one's at. You can't think how your remarks and liking thrilled me. You seemed, both in your classing them and when you got to details, to agree so closely with what I felt about them (only, of course, I often feel doubtful about their relative value to other poetry) that I knew you understood what they meant. It sounds a poor compliment—or else a queer conceitedness—to

remark on your understanding them; but it's really been rather a shock to me—and made me momentarily hopeless—that so many intelligent and well-tasted people didn't seem to have any idea what I was driving at, in any poem of the last few years. It opened my eyes to the fact that people who like poetry are barely more common than people who like pictures.

"I'm (of course) unrepentant about the 'unpleasant' poems.[1] I don't claim great merit for the *Channel Passage:* but the point of it was (or should have been!) 'serious.' There are common and sordid things—situations or details—that may suddenly bring all tragedy, or at least the brutality of actual emotions, to you. I rather grasp relievedly at them, after I've beaten vain hands in the rosy mists of poets' experiences. Lear's button, and Hilda Lessways turning the gas suddenly on, and—but you know more of them than I. Shakespeare's not unsympathetic. 'My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun.' And the emotions of a sea-sick lover seem to me at least as poignant as those of the hero who has 'brain-fever.' . . . . . .

"Mrs. Cornford tried to engage me in a controversy over the book—she and her school. They

[1] I had expressed an apologetic preference for poems that I could read at meals.

are known as the Heart-criers, because they believe all poetry ought to be short, simple, naïve, and a cry from the heart; the sort of thing an inspired only child might utter if it was in the habit of posing to its elders. They object to my poetry as unreal, affected, complex, 'literary,' and full of long words. I'm re-writing English literature on their lines. Do you think this is a fair rendering of Shakespeare's first twenty sonnets, if Mrs. Cornford had had the doing of them?

TRIOLET

If you would only have a son,
  William, the day would be a glad one.
It *would* be nice for everyone,
If you would only have a son.
And, William, what would *you* have done
  If Lady Pembroke hadn't had one?
If you would only have a son,
  William, the day *would* be a glad one!

It seems to me to have got the kernel of the situation, and stripped away all unnecessary verbiage or conscious adornment."

The verdicts of the newspapers varied from that of the *Saturday Review,* which "definitely told Mr. Rupert Brooke to 'mar no more trees with writing love-songs in their barks,' " to that

of the *Daily Chronicle,* which prophesied, by the mouth of Edward Thomas, that he would be a poet, and not a little one. It may be said that in general the book was received with a good deal of interest, and hailed as at least promising. Many of the critics seemed so struck with the 'unpleasant' poems (seven, at most, out of fifty) that they could hardly notice the others. This showed, perhaps, a wrong sense of proportion; but the author's own point of view about them is certainly a matter of interest, and though the purpose of this memoir is not critical, it may be worth while here to put together some of its factors, besides those which appear from the letter I have just quoted. It is, of course, absurdly untrue that, as has been said, he felt he ought to make up for his personal beauty by being ugly in his poetry. To begin with, ugliness had a quite unaffected attraction for him; he thought it just as *interesting* as anything else; he didn't like it—he loathed it—but he liked thinking about it. 'The poetical character,' as Keats said, 'lives in gusto.' Then he still had at this age (24) a good deal of what soon afterwards faded completely away—the bravado, the feeling that it was fun to shock and astonish the respectable, which came out in his school letters. Again, he was incensed by the usual attitude of criticism—

in his view, either stupid or hypocritical—towards 'coarseness' in literature. "Indeed," he wrote early this year in a review, "the Elizabethans *were* refined. Their stories were shocking, their thoughts nasty, their language indelicate. It is absurd to want them otherwise. It is intolerable that these critics should shake the pedagogic finger of amazed reproval at them. . . . . Such people do not understand that the vitality of the Elizabethan Drama is inseparable from [its coarseness]. Their wail that its realism is mingled with indecency is more than once repeated. True literary realism, they think, is a fearless reproduction of what real living men say when there is a clergyman in the room." The feeling here expressed urged him to make a demonstration; it dignified the boyish impulse into a duty.

To conclude this subject I will quote a letter to his publisher about the sonnet *Libido,* to which the original title *Lust* is now restored: "My own feeling is that to remove it would be to overbalance the book still more in the direction of unimportant prettiness. There's plenty of that sort of wash in the other pages for the readers who like it. They needn't read the parts which are new and serious. About a lot of the book I occasionally feel that like Ophelia I've turned

'thought and affliction, passion, hell itself, to favour and to prettiness.' So I'm extra keen about the places where I think that thought and passion are, however clumsily, *not* so transmuted. This was one of them. It seemed to have qualities of reality and novelty that made up for the clumsiness. . . . I should like it to stand, as a representative in the book of abortive poetry against literary verse; and because I can't see any aesthetic ground against it which would not damn three-quarters of the rest of the book too; or any moral ground at all."

During all this time he was working up to a rather serious illness. As a child and as a boy he had been delicate, but at Cambridge his health had greatly improved, and all the time he was there he never had to go to a doctor. Now, however, he left his open-air life and came to London for work on Webster. "He lived," his Mother tells me, "in wretched rooms in Charlotte Street, spending all day at the British Museum, going round to his friends in the evening and sitting up most of the night. He then went to Grantchester to finish his dissertation, and from his brother's account scarcely went to bed at all for a week, several times working all night. He came home for Christmas quite tired out." The

letter to me which I last quoted, written at Rugby on the 22nd of December, ends with this: "I'm sorry I never saw you again. The last part of November and the first of December I spent in writing my dissertation at Grantchester. . . . . I couldn't do it at all well. I came to London in a dilapidated condition for a day or two after it was over. Now I'm here over Christmas. About the 27th I go to Lulworth with a reading-party for a fortnight. Then to the South of France, then Germany . . . and the future's mere mist. I want to stay out of England for some time. (1) I don't like it. (2) I want to work—a play, and so on. (3) I'm rather tired and dejected.

"So I *probably* shan't be in London for some time. If I am, I'll let you know. I'm going to try to do scraps—reviewing, etc.—in my spare time for the immediate future. I suppose you don't edit a magazine? I might review Elizabethan books at some length for the *Admiralty Gazette* or *T.A.T.* (Tattle amongst Tars), or whatever journal you officially produce? At least I hope you'll issue an order to include my poems in the library of all submarines."

His next letter is of February 25th, 1912, from Rugby: "I went to Lulworth after Christmas for a reading party. There I collapsed sud-

denly into a foodless and sleepless Hell. God! how one can suffer from what my amiable specialist described as a 'nervous breakdown.' (He reported that I had got into a 'seriously introspective condition'! and—more tangibly—that my weight had gone down a stone or two.) I tottered, being too tired for suicide, to Cannes, not because I like the b—— place, but because my mother happened to be there. I flapped slowly towards the surface there; and rose a little more at Munich. I have come here for a month or two to complete it. After that I shall be allowed (and, by Phoebus, able, I hope) to do some work. My cure consists in perpetual over-eating and over-sleeping, no exercise, and no thought. Rather a nice existence, but oh God! weary."

In March he went for a walk in Sussex with James Strachey, and sent Miss Cox a sensational account, dated from 'The Mermaid Club, Rye,' of an unsuccessful attempt to visit a great man whose acquaintance he had made at Cambridge. "I read the 'Way of All Flesh' and talk to James. James and I have been out this evening to call on Mr. Henry James at 9.0. We found—at length—the house. It was immensely rich, and brilliantly lighted at every window on the

ground floor. The upper floors were deserted: one black window open. The house is straight on the street. We nearly fainted with fear of a company. At length I pressed the Bell of the Great Door—there was a smaller door further along, the servants' door we were told. No answer. I pressed again. At length a slow dragging step was heard within. It stopped inside the door. We shuffled. Then, very slowly, very loudly, immense numbers of chains and bolts were drawn within. There was a pause again. Further rattling within. Then the steps seemed to be heard retreating. There was silence. We waited in a wild agonising stupefaction. The house was dead silent. At length there was a shuffling noise from the servants' door. We thought someone was about to emerge from there to greet us. We slid down towards it—nothing happened. We drew back and observed the house. A low whistle came from it. Then nothing for two minutes. Suddenly a shadow passed quickly across the light in the window nearest the door. Again nothing happened. James and I, sick with surmise, stole down the street. We thought we heard another whistle, as we departed. We came back here shaking—we didn't know at what.

"If the evening paper, as you get this, tells of

the murder of Mr. Henry James—you'll know."

By this time he was quite well again. He went to Germany in April, and stayed there for two or three months, mostly with Dudley Ward in Berlin, where he wrote *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester* [1] ('this hurried stuff,' he called it when he sent it me). "I read Elizabethans for 2-3 hours a day, quite happily," he wrote to his Mother. "Other work I haven't tried much. I started a short play, and worked at it for two or three hours. I paid the penalty by not getting to sleep till 5 next morning." The play was a one-act melodrama called *Lithuania,* founded on the well-known anecdote of a son coming back with a fortune, after years of absence in America, to his peasant-family, who kill him for his money and then find out who he was. (It was acted in the spring of 1916 by Miss Lillah M'Carthy, Miss Clare Greet, Leon M. Lion, John Drinkwater, and others, at a charity matinée at His Majesty's, together with Gordon Bottomley's *King Lear's Wife* and Wilfrid Gibson's *Hoops;* and was thought to show much promise of dramatic power.)

He came home from Germany as well as ever, to spend the rest of the summer at Grantchester.

[1] This poem was first published in the King's magazine *Basileon.* The MS. is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum.

I must here touch upon a change in his outlook, a development of his character, which, as I think, took form during this year from the germs which may be seen in his earlier letters, already quoted, to Mr. Cotterill and to Ben Keeling. Perhaps it was the result of the 'introspection' which contributed to his illness, and to which his illness in its turn gave opportunity. To put it briefly and bluntly, he had discovered that goodness was the most important thing in life—'that immortal beauty and goodness,' as he wrote much later, 'that radiance, to love which is to feel one has safely hold of eternal things.' Since he grew up he had never held (and did not now acquire) any definite, still less any ready-made, form of religious belief; his ideals had been mainly intellectual; and if he had been asked to define goodness, he would probably have said that it meant having true opinions about ethics. Now he found that it was even more a matter of the heart and of the will; and he did not shrink from avowing his changed view to his old comrades in the life of the mind, some of whom perhaps found it a little disconcerting, a little ridiculous.

Henceforward the only thing that he cared for—or rather felt he ought to care for—in a man, was the possession of goodness; its absence, the

one thing that he hated, sometimes with fierceness. He never codified his morals, never made laws for the conduct of others, or for his own; it was the spirit, the passion, that counted with him. "That is the final rule of life, the best one ever made," he wrote next year from the Pacific,— " 'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones'— remembering that all the eight hundred millions on earth, except oneself, are the little ones."

In the autumn of this year he began coming to London oftener and for longer visits, usually staying at my rooms in Gray's Inn; going to plays and music halls, seeing pictures, and making numbers of new acquaintances and friends. Henry James, W. B. Yeats and John Masefield he knew already; and he made friends about this time with Edmund Gosse, Walter de la Mare, Wilfrid Gibson, John Drinkwater, W. H. Davies, and many others.

There was a general feeling among the younger poets that modern English poetry was very good, and sadly neglected by readers. Rupert announced one evening, sitting half-undressed on his bed, that he had conceived a brilliant scheme. He would write a book of poetry, and publish it as a selection from the works of twelve different writers, six men and six women,

all with the most convincing pseudonyms. That, he thought, *must* make them sit up. It occurred to me that as we both believed there were at least twelve flesh-and-blood poets whose work, if properly thrust under the public's nose, had a good chance of producing the effect he desired, it would be simpler to use the material which was ready to hand. Next day (September 20th it was) we lunched in my rooms with Gibson and Drinkwater, and Harold Monro and Arundel del Re (editor and sub-editor of the then *Poetry Review,* since re-named *Poetry and Drama*), and started the plan of the book which was published in December under the name of *Georgian Poetry, 1911-1912.*

This was our great excitement for the rest of the year. Rupert went to stay with Ward in Berlin for November, and kept sending suggestions for promoting the sale of the book. (Years before, a cynical young friend of ours at King's had told me that though 'Rupert's public form was the youthful poet, the real foundation of his character was a hard business faculty.') "I forget all my other ideas," he wrote, after making some very practical proposals, "but they each sold some 25 copies. I have a hazy vision of incredible *réclame.* You ought to have an immense map of England (*vide* 'Tono-Bungay') and plan

campaigns with its aid. And literary charts, each district mapped out, and a fortress secured. John Buchan to fill a page of the *Spectator:* Filson Young in the *P.M.G.* (we shall be seventeen *Things that Matter* in italics?), etc., etc. You'll be able to found a hostel for poor Georgians on the profits." Some of his ideas were too vast, but others were acted on; and though delays of printing and binding kept the book back till a few days before Christmas, frustrating our calculation on huge sales to present-givers, its success outran our wildest hopes.

He spent most of the spring of 1913 in London, enjoying himself in many directions. He went again and again to the Russian Ballet, which he loved ("They, if anything can, redeem our civilisation," he had written in December. "I'd give everything to be a ballet-designer"); and he conceived a passion for the Hippodrome Revue, *Hullo, Ragtime!* which he saw ten times. He had always been on occasion a great fitter-in of things and people, and vast networks of his minute arrangements survive on postcards, though without the finishing strands put in by telephone. He got to know more and more people, including the Asquith family and George Wyndham, with whom he spent a Sunday at Clouds. He had no ambition for the career of a

'young man about town'; but he felt he might let himself go for the moment, as he would be starting for America before he could get too much involved.

He got his Fellowship on March 8th. "It's very good of you to congratulate me," he wrote to Geoffrey Fry. "You can't think how I despise you mere civilians, now. *Jetzt bin ich Professor*. A grey look of learning has already settled on my face. And I wear spectacles." Next week he went to King's to be admitted, or, as he called it, 'churched.' "I dined solemnly," he told Mrs. Cornford, "with very old white-haired men, at one end of a vast dimly-lit hall, and afterwards drank port somnolently in the Common Room, with the College silver, and 17th Century portraits, and a 16th Century fireplace, and 15th Century ideas. The perfect Don, I . . ."

The only other break in the London life was a visit to Rugby towards the end of March, when he wrote a rapturous spring-letter to Miss Cathleen Nesbitt. "But oh! but oh! such a day! 'Spring came complete with a leap in a day,' said the wisest and nicest man in Warwickshire—my godfather,[1] an aged scholar, infinitely learned in Greek, Latin, English, and Life. He said it was a quotation from Browning. It certainly

[1] Mr. Whitelaw.

fitted. I took him a walk. The air had changed all in a night, and had that soft caressingness, and yet made you want to jump and gambol. *Alacer,* and not *acer,* was, we agreed, the epithet for the air. Oh! it's mad to be in London with the world like this. I can't tell you of it. The excitement and music of the birds, the delicious madness of the air, the blue haze in the distance, the straining of the hedges, the green mist of shoots about the trees—oh, it wasn't in these details—it was beyond and round them—something that included them. It's the sort of day that brought back to me what I've had so rarely for the last two years—that tearing hunger to do and do and do things. I want to walk 1000 miles, and write 1000 plays, and sing 1000 poems, and drink 1000 pots of beer, and kiss 1000 girls, and —oh, a million things! . . . . . The spring makes me almost ill with excitement. I go round corners on the roads shivering and nearly crying with suspense, as one did as a child, fearing some playmate in waiting to jump out and frighten one."

V

On May 22nd he started for New York on a year's travels. "You won't see me again till I'm

a bold, bad, bearded broncho-buster in a red shirt and riding-breeches," he wrote to Miss Sybil Pye. His plans were vague, and at that time he expected to be back by the end of 1913. He had written to his mother in February, to explain: "I think, now my physical health is quite all right, I shall go off to America or somewhere. I feel just as I did in the autumn, that it's no good going on in England. . . . . It is only wasting time to go on without doing proper work. I think of going off to California or somewhere, and doing some kind of work, or tramping. I shall take what money I have, and if they don't give me a fellowship, I can capitalise £200 or so, and that'll last me for as long as I want to be abroad. I have no fear about being able to make a living now, for there are so many papers that'll print anything by me whenever I like."

"We may meet again in this world," he wrote to the Raverats, "I brown and bearded, you mere red round farmers. When that'll be, I know not. Perhaps in six months. Perhaps in six years. Or we may only find each other in a whiter world, nighty-clad, harped, winged, celibate.

> Shall we go walks along the hills of Heaven,
> Rücksack on back and aureole in pocket,
> And stay in Paradisal pubs, and drink

Immortal toasts in old ambrosia,
Fry wings in nectar on the glassy sea,
And build the fire with twigs of amaranth?"

Here is his farewell to England, in a letter to a friend from the s.s. *Cedric:* "I arrived solitary on the boat. After it started I went to the office, more to show that I existed than in the dimmest hope of getting anything—and there was stuck up a list called 'Unclaimed Mail.' (I thought it sounded as if a lot of the Knights who had promised to equip themselves for the Quest of the Holy Grail had missed the train, or married a wife, or overslept, or something.) And at the top of the list 'Mr. Rupert Brooke.' . . . . . .

"—day. Time is no more. I have been a million years on this boat. I don't know if it's this month or last or next. Sometimes, remotely, in a past existence, I was on land. But this is another existence. . . . I have my joys. Today I ate *clam-chowder*. That's romance, isn't it? I ordered it quite recklessly. I didn't know what it was. I only knew that anything called *clam-chowder* must be strange beyond words.

If you were like clam-chowder
And I were like the spoon,
And the band were playing louder
And a little more in tune,

I'd stir you till I spilled you,
Or kiss you till I killed you,
If you were like clam-chowder
And I were like the spoon.

(But you don't know Swinburne.) 'Clam-chowder,' my God! what am I coming to? . . .

"I haven't told you much about my voyage, have I? There's not much to tell. I felt, before I got your letter, a trifle lonely at Liverpool. Everybody else seemed to have people to see them off. So I went back on shore and found a dirty little boy, who was unoccupied, and said his name was William. 'Will you wave to me if I give you sixpence, William?' I said. 'Why yes,' said William. So I gave him sixpence, and went back on board. And when the time came he leaned over his railing on the landing-stage, and waved. And now and then he shouted indistinct messages in a shrill voice. And as we slid away, the last object I looked at was a small dot waving a white handkerchief, or nearly white, faithfully. So I got my sixpenn'orth and my farewell—Dear William!"

For his travels in America and Canada, his letters to the *Westminster Gazette,* since republished, must be allowed in the main to speak; but these may be supplemented by scraps of his let-

ters to his mother and his friends. "America hasn't changed me much yet," he wrote from New York. "I've got the adorablest little touch of an American accent, and I'm a bit thinner." He wasn't very happy at first. "When I'm alone," he wrote to me on June 29th from the Montreal Express, "I sink into a kind of mental stupor which may last for months. I shan't be really right till I get back to you all." And again from Ottawa, ten days later, "I don't get very miserable, or go to pieces (save for occasional bursts of home-sickness just before meals); but my whole level of life descends to an incredible muddy flatness. I do no reading, no thinking, no writing. And very often I don't see many things. The real hell of it is that I get so numb that my brain and senses don't record fine or clear impressions. So the time is nearly all waste. I'm very much ashamed of it all. For I've always beforehand a picture of myself dancing through foreign cities, drinking in novelty, hurling off letters to the *W.G.*, breaking into song and sonnet, dashing off plays and novels. . . . Lord, Lord! . . . . . .

"American 'hospitality' means that with the nice ones you can be at once on happy and intimate terms. Oh dear, the tears quite literally well up into my eyes when I think of a group

of young Harvard people I tumbled into—at Harvard. They had the charm and freshness and capacity for instantly creating a relation of happy and warm friendliness that, for instance, Denis [1] has. It's a nice thing . . . . . .

"You, at home, have no conception how you're all getting a sanctity and halo about you in my mind. I dwell so much and so sentimentally on all the dear dead days that I am beginning to see no faults and all virtues in all of you. *You,* my dear, appear perfection in every part. Your passion for anagrams is a lovable and deeply intellectual taste. Your acquaintance with [a *bête noire* of his] a beautiful thing. Your lack of sympathy with the Labour Party turns to a noble and picturesque Toryism. Even your preference for gilded over comfortable chairs loses something of its ugliness in my heart. Of you and Norton and Duncan and —— and even —— I think incessantly, devotedly, and tearfully. Even of figures who, to be frank, have hovered but dimly on the outskirts of my consciousness, I am continually and fragrantly memorial. . . . . I make up little minor, pitiful songs, the burden of which is that I have a folk-longing to get back from all this Imperial luxury to the simplicity of the little places and quiet folks I

[1] Denis Browne, of whom more hereafter.

knew and loved. One very beautiful one has the chorus—

Would God I were eating plover's eggs,
And drinking dry champagne,
With the Bernard Shaws, Mr. and Mrs. Masefield, Lady Horner, Neil Primrose, Raleigh, the Right Honourable Augustine Birrell, Eddie, six or seven Asquiths, and Felicity Tree,
In Downing Street again."

His next letter was from Toronto, a fortnight later: "I've found here an Arts and Letters Club of poets, painters, journalists, etc., where they'd heard of me, and read *G. P.*,[1] and, oh Eddie, one fellow actually possessed my 'Poems.' Awful Triumph. Every now and then one comes up and presses my hand and says, 'Wal Sir, you cannot know what a memorable Day in my life this is.' Then I do my pet boyish-modesty stunt and go pink all over; and everyone thinks it *too* delightful. One man said to me, 'Mr. Brooks' (my Canadian name), 'Sir, I may tell you that in my opinion you have Mr. Noyes skinned.' That means I'm better than him: a great compliment. But they're really quite an up-to-date lot; and very cheery and pleasant. I go to-morrow to the desert and the wilds."

[1] *Georgian Poetry.*

The desert and the wilds suited him much better than the cities. "Today," he wrote to Miss Nesbit on the 3rd of August from Lake George, about 70 miles from Winnipeg, "I'm 26 years old—and I've done so little. I'm very much ashamed. By God, I am going to make things hum though—but that's all so far away. I'm lying quite naked on a beach of golden sand, 6 miles away from the hunting-lodge, the other man near by, a gun between us in case bears appear, the boat pulled up on the shore, the lake very blue and ripply, and the sun rather strong. . . . . We caught two pike on the way out, which lie picturesquely in the bows of the boat. Along the red-gold beach are the tracks of various wild animals, mostly jumping-deer and caribou. One red-deer we saw as we came round the corner, lolloping along the beach, stopping and snuffling the wind, and then going on again. Very lovely. We were up-wind and it didn't see us, and the meat wasn't needed, so we didn't shoot at it (I'm glad, I'm no 'sportsman'). We bathed off the beach, and then lit a fire of birch and spruce, and fried eggs, and ate cold caribou-heart, and made tea, and had, oh! blueberry pie. Cooking and eating a meal naked is the most solemnly primitive thing one can do; and—this is the one thing which will make you realise that

I'm living far the most wonderfully and incredibly romantic life you ever heard of, and infinitely superior to your miserable crawling London existence—the place we landed at is an INDIAN CAMP. At any moment a flotilla of birchbark canoes may sweep round the corner, crowded with Indians, braves and squaws and papooses—and not those lonely half-breeds and stray Indians that speak English, mind you, but the Real Thing! Shades of Fenimore Cooper!"

But he was quite able to cope with civilisation when he got back to it. The next letter is ten days later, from Edmonton: "I find I'm becoming very thick-skinned and bold, and the complete journalist. I've just been interviewed by a reporter. I fairly crushed him. I just put my cigar in the corner of my mouth, and undid my coat-buttons, and put my thumbs under my armpits, and spat, and said, 'Say, Kid, this is some town.' He asked me a lot of questions to which I didn't know the answers, so I lied. . . . . .

"Also I am become very good at bearding people. I just enter railway offices and demand free passes as a journalist, and stamp into immense newspaper buildings and say I want to talk for an hour to the Chief Editor, and I can lean across the counter with a cigarette and dis-

cuss the Heart with the young lady who sells cigars, newspapers, and stamps. I believe I could do a deal in Real Estate, in the bar, over a John Collins, with a clean-shaven Yankee with a tremulous eyelid and a moist lower lip. In fact, I am a Man."

He stayed some days at Vancouver, where he wrote his mother a letter which gives me occasion to stand in a very white sheet. "I'm glad you like the Westminster articles. They're not always very well written, but I think they're the sort of stuff that ought to interest an intelligent *W.G.* reader more than the ordinary travel stuff one sees. I hope they won't annoy people over this side. Canadians and Americans are so touchy. But it's absurd to ladle out indiscriminate praise, as most people do. I heard from Eddie about the proofs. I was very sad at one thing. In my first or second article I had made an American say 'You bet your'—which is good American slang. Eddie thought a word was left out and inserted *'boots.'* I only hope the *W.G.* omitted it. I suppose it'll be printed by now. If not, 'phone the *W.G.* or write—But it must be too late. Alas! Alas!

"Vancouver is a queer place, rather different from the rest of Canada. More oriental. The country and harbour are rather beautiful, with

great violet mountains all round, snow-peaks in the distance. They interviewed me and put (as usual) a quite inaccurate report of it in the paper, saying I'd come here to investigate the Japanese question. In consequence about five people rang me up every morning at 8 o'clock (British Columbians get up an hour earlier than I) to say they wanted to wait on me and give me their views. Out here they always have telephones in the bedrooms. One old sea-captain came miles to tell me that the Japanese—and every other—trouble was due to the fact that British Columbia had neglected the teaching of the Gospels on the land question. He wasn't so far out in some respects."

He sailed for Hawaii from San Francisco, where he was warmly welcomed at Berkeley University by Professor Gayly and Professor Wells, and made many friends among the undergraduates. "California," he wrote to me on the 1st of October, "is nice, and the Californians a friendly bunch. There's a sort of goldenness about 'Frisco and the neighbourhood. It hangs in the air, and about the people. Everyone is very cheery and cordial and simple. They are rather a nation apart, different from the rest of the States. Much more like the English. As everywhere in this extraordinary country, I am

welcomed with open arms when I say I know Masefield and Goldie![1] It's very queer. I can't for the life of me help moving about like a metropolitan among rustics, or an Athenian in Thrace. Their wide-mouthed awe at England is so touching—they really are a colony of ours still. That they should be speaking to a man who knows Lowes Dickinson, has met Galsworthy, who once saw Belloc plain! . . . What should we feel if we could speak with an *habitué* of the theatre at Athens, Fifth Century, or with Mine Host of the Mermaid? All that they have with me, the dears! Yet I don't know why I write this from California, the one place that has a literature and tradition of its own.

"On Tuesday—the Pacific. I'll write thence, but God knows when it'll get to you."

He wrote no letters to the *Westminster* from the South Seas, chiefly because the life there was too absorbing, but partly perhaps from doubt whether they would be used. He had got a letter from which he inferred, wrongly, that only one series of six letters was wanted from him. "Isn't it beastly?" he wrote. "I supposed I was going on once a week for months and years. I could read me once a week for ever, couldn't you?" But there are plenty of letters to friends.

[1] G. Lowes Dickinson.

"The Pacific," he wrote from the steamer on October 12th, "has been very pacific, God be thanked—so I've had a pleasant voyage. Three passionate Pacific women cast lustrous eyes towards me, but, with a dim remembrance of the fate of Conrad characters who succumbed to such advances, I evade them. I pass my hand wearily through my long hair, and say, 'Is not the soul of Maurya a glimmering wing in the moth-hour?' or words to that effect. The Celtic method is not understood in this part of the world."

The first stop was at Honolulu, where he stayed on Waikiki beach, the scene of the sonnet beginning "Warm perfumes like a breath from vine and tree." He wrote to his mother without enthusiasm: "Honolulu itself is a dreadfully American place, just like any city in the States or Canada"; and he found little better to say of the country round about than that "it really *is* tropical in character, like some of the gardens and places at Cannes, on an immense scale."

But this is what he wrote to me about Samoa from the steamer taking him to Fiji: "It's all true about the South Seas! I get a little tired of it at moments, because I am just too old for Romance. But there it is; there it wonderfully is;

heaven on earth, the ideal life, little work, dancing and singing and eating; naked people of incredible loveliness, perfect manners, and immense kindliness, a divine tropic climate, and intoxicating beauty of scenery. I wandered with an 'interpreter'—entirely genial and quite incapable of English—through Samoan villages. The last few days I stopped in one, where a big marriage feast was going on. I lived in a Samoan house (the coolest in the world) with a man and his wife, nine children ranging from a proud beauty of 18 to a round object of 1 year, a dog, a cat, a proud hysterical hen, and a gaudy scarlet and green parrot who roved the roof and beams with a wicked eye, choosing a place whence to —— twice a day, with humorous precision, on my hat and clothes.

"The Samoan girls have extraordinarily beautiful bodies, and walk like goddesses. They're a lovely brown colour, without any black Melanesian admixture. Can't you imagine how shattered and fragmentary a heart I'm bearing away to Fiji and Tahiti? And, oh dear! I'm afraid they'll be just as bad.

"And it's all true about, for instance, cocoanuts. You tramp through a strange, vast, dripping, tropical forest for hours, listening to weird liquid hootings from birds and demons in the

branches above. Then you feel thirsty. So you send your boy up a great perpendicular palm. He runs up with utter ease and grace, cuts off a couple of vast nuts, and comes down and makes holes in them. And they're chock-full of the best drink in the world. Romance! Romance! I walked 15 miles through mud and up and down mountains, and swam three rivers, to get this boat. But if ever you miss me, suddenly, one day, from lecture-room B in King's, or from the Moulin d'Or at lunch, you'll know that I've got sick for the full moon on these little thatched roofs, and the palms against the morning, and the Samoan boys and girls diving thirty feet into a green sea or a deep mountain pool under a waterfall—and that I've gone back."

The next place was Fiji, where he wrote to Edmund Gosse from Suva on November 19th. "I've just got into this place, from Samoa. I said to myself, 'Fiji is obviously the wildest place I can get to round here. The name, and pictures of the inhabitants, prove it.' And lo! a large English town, with two banks, several churches, dental surgeons, a large gaol, auctioneers, book-makers, two newspapers, and all the other appurtenances of civilisation! But I fancy I'll be able to get some little boat and go off to some smaller wilder islands. . . . . .

"Perplexing country! At home everything is so simple, and choice is swift, for the sensible man. There is only the choice between writing a good sonnet and making a million pounds. Who could hesitate? But *here* the choice is between writing a sonnet, and climbing a straight hundred-foot cocoanut palm, or diving forty feet from a rock into pellucid blue-green water. Which is the better, there? One's European literary soul begins to be haunted by strange doubts and shaken with fundamental, fantastic misgivings. I think I shall return home. . . . . .

"Oh, it's horribly true, what you wrote, that one only finds in the South Seas what one brings there. Perhaps I could have found Romance if I'd brought it. Yet I do not think one could help but find *less* trouble than one brings. The idea of the South Seas as a place of passion and a Mohammedan's paradise is but a sailor's yarn. It is nothing near so disturbing. It's rather the opposite of alcohol according to the Porter's definition: for it promotes performance but takes away desire. Yet I can understand Stevenson finding—as you put it—the Shorter Catechism there. One keeps realising, however unwillingly, responsibility. I noticed in myself, and in the other white people in Samoa, a trait that

I have remarked in Schoolmasters. You know that sort of slightly irritated tolerance, and lack of *irresponsibility,* that mark the pedagogue? One feels that one's a White Man (*vide* Kipling *passim*)—ludicrously. I kept thinking I was in the Sixth at Rugby again. These dear good people, with their laughter and friendliness and crowns of flowers—one feels that one *must* protect them. If one was having an evening out with Falstaff and Bardolph themselves, and a small delightful child came up with 'Please I'm lost and I want to get home,' wouldn't one have to leave good fellowship and spend the evening in mean streets tracking its abode? That's, I fancy, how the white man feels in these forgotten —and dissolving—pieces of heaven. And that perhaps is what Stevenson felt—I don't know enough about him. His memory is sweet there, in Samoa: especially among the natives. The white men, mostly traders, who remain from his time, have—for such people—very warm recollections of his personality: but—with a touch of pathos—avow themselves unable to see any merit in his work. Such stuff as the *Wrong Box* they frankly can't understand a grown man writing . . . I went up the steep hill above Vailima, where the grave is. It's a high and lonely spot. I took a Samoan of about 20 to

guide me. He was much impressed by Stevenson's fame. 'That fellow,' he said, 'I think every fellow in world know him.' Then he looked perplexed. 'But my father say,' he went on, 'Stevenson no big man—small man.' That a slight man of medium height should be so famous, puzzled him altogether. If he had been seven feet high, now! Fame is a curious thing. . . . . Oh, *do* forgive the envelope. My own, in this awful climate, are all fast stuck, though never filled, like an English churchman's mind. And I'm reduced to these fantastic affairs."

Other letters add touches to his picture. To me he wrote: "Suva is a queer place; much civilised; full of English people who observe the Rules of Etiquette, and call on third Thursdays, and do not speak to the 'natives.' Fiji's not so attractive as Samoa, but more *macabre*. Across the bay are ranges of inky, sinister mountains, over which there are always clouds and darkness. No matter how fine or windy or hot or cheerful it may be in Suva, that trans-sinutic region is nothing but forbidding and terrible. The Greeks would have made it the entrance of the other world—it is just what I've always imagined Avernus to be like. I'm irresistibly attracted by them, and when I come back from my cruise, I intend to walk among them. Shall I return?

If not, spill some blood in a trench—you'll find the recipe in Homer—and my wandering shade will come for an hour or two to lap it. . . . . The sunsets here! the colour of the water over the reef! the gloom and terror of those twisted mountains! and the extraordinary contrasts in the streets and the near country—for there are fifty thousand Hindoos, indentured labour, here, emaciated and proud, in Liberty-coloured garments, mournful, standing out among these gay, pathetic, sturdy children the Fijians. The Hindoos, who were civilised when we were Fijians; and the Fijians, who will never be civilised. And amongst them, weedy Australian clerks, uncertain whether they most despise a 'haw-haw Englishman' or a 'dam nigger,' and without the conscience of the one or the charm of the other; secret devil-worshippers, admirers of America, English without tradition and Yankees without go. *Give* me a landed gentry, ten shillings on wheat, and hanging for sheep-stealing; also the Established Church, whence I spring."

To Denis Browne he wrote about the dancing and the music: "I prefer watching a *Siva-Siva* to observing Nijinsky. Oh dear, I so wish you'd been with me for some of these native dances. I've got no ear, and can't get the tunes down. They're very simple—just a few bars with a scale

of about 5 notes, repeated over and over again. But it's the *Rhythm* that gets you. They get extraordinarily rhythmic effects, everybody beating their hands, or tapping with a stick; and the dancers swaying their bodies and tapping with their feet. None of that damned bounding and pirouetting. Just *stylisierte* pantomime, sometimes slightly indecent. But *most* exciting. Next time I get sick of England, I'm going to bring you along out here, and work the whole thing out.

"You won't know me when—if ever—I return. Many things I have lost; my knowledge of art and literature, my fragmentary manners, my acquaintance with the English tongue, and any slight intelligence I ever had; but I have gained other things; a rich red-brown for my skin, a knowledge of mixed drinks, an ability to talk or drink with any kind of man, and a large *répertoire* of dirty stories. Am I richer or poorer? I don't know. I only regret that I shall never be able to mix in your or any intelligent circles again. I am indistinguishable (except by my poverty) from a Hall man."

"Dear Miss Asquith," [1] he wrote in mid-December from 'somewhere in the mountains of Fiji.' "Forgive this paper. Its limpness is be-

[1] Miss Violet Asquith, now Lady Bonham-Carter.

cause it has been in terrific thunderstorms, and through most of the rivers in Fiji, in the last few days. Its marks of dirt are because small naked brown babies *will* crawl up and handle it. *And any blood-stains will be mine.* The point is, will they . . .? It's absurd, I know. It's twenty years since they've eaten anybody, and far more since they've done what I particularly and unreasonably detest—fastened the victim down, cut pieces off him one by one, and cooked and eaten them before his eyes. To witness one's own transubstantiation into a naked black man, that seems the last indignity. Consideration of the thoughts that pour through the mind of the ever-diminishing remnant of a man, as it sees its late limbs cooking, moves me deeply. I have been meditating a sonnet, as I sit here, surrounded by dusky faces and gleaming eyes:—

Dear, they have poached the eyes you loved so well—

It'd do well for No. 101 and last, in a modern sonnet-sequence, wouldn't it? I don't know how it would go on. The fourth line would have to be

And all my turbulent lips are *maître-d'hôtel*—

I don't know how to scan French. I fancy that limps. But *'all'* is very strong in the modern style.

"The idea comes out in a slighter thing:—

The limbs that erstwhile charmed your sight
Are now a savage's delight;
The ear that heard your whispered vow
Is one of many *entrées* now;
Broiled are the arms in which you clung,
And devilled is the angelic tongue: . . .
And oh! my anguish as I see
A Black Man gnaw your favourite knee!
Of the two eyes that were your ruin,
One now observes the other stewing.
My lips (the inconstancy of man!)
Are yours no more. The legs that ran
Each dewy morn their love to wake,
Are now a steak, are now a steak! . . .

Oh, dear! I suppose it ought to end on the Higher Note, the Wider Outlook. Poetry has to, they tell me. You may caress details, all the main parts of the poem, but at last you have to open the window and turn to God, or Earth, or Eternity, or any of the Grand Old Endings. It gives Uplift, as we Americans say. And that's so essential. (Did you ever notice how the Browning family's poems all refer suddenly to God in the last line? It's laughable if you read through them in that way. 'What if that friend happened to be—God?' 'What comes next? Is it—God?' 'And with God be the rest.' 'And if God choose, I shall but love thee better

after death.' . . . etc., etc. I forget them all now. It shows what the Victorians were.)

"So must I soar:—

> O love, O loveliest and best,
> Natives this *body* may digest;
> Whole, and still yours, my *soul* shall dwell,
> Uneaten, safe, incoctible . . .

It's too dull. I shall go out and wander through the forest paths by the grey moonlight. Fiji in moonlight is like nothing else in this world or the next. It's all dim colours and all scents. And here, where it's high up, the most fantastically-shaped mountains in the world tower up all around, and little silver clouds and wisps of mist run bleating up and down the valleys and hillsides like lambs looking for their mother. There's only one thing on earth as beautiful; and that's Samoa by moonlight. That's utterly different, merely Heaven, sheer loveliness. You lie on a mat in a cool Samoan hut, and look out on the white sand under the high palms, and a gentle sea, and the black line of the reef a mile out, and moonlight over everything, floods and floods of it, not sticky, like Honolulu moonlight, not to be eaten with a spoon, but flat and abundant, such that you could slice thin golden-white shavings off it, as off cheese. And then among

it all are the loveliest people in the world, moving and dancing like gods and goddesses, very quietly and mysteriously, and utterly content. It is sheer beauty, so pure that it's difficult to breathe in it—like living in a Keats world, only it's less syrupy—Endymion without sugar. Completely unconnected with this world.

"There is a poem:

I know an Island
Where the long scented holy nights pass slow,
And there, 'twixt lowland and highland,
The white stream falls into a pool I know,
Deep, hidden with ferns and flowers, soft as dreaming,
Where the brown laughing dancing bathers go . . .

It ends after many pages:

I know an Island
Where the slow fragrant-breathing nights creep past;
And there, 'twixt lowland and highland,
A deep, fern-shrouded, murmurous water glimmers;
There I'll come back at last,
And find my friends, the flower-crowned, laughing swimmers,
And— [1]

I forget. And I've not written the middle part. And it's very bad, like all true poems. I love England; and all the people in it; but oh, how

[1] These lines appear again, considerably altered, in the essay called *Some Niggers,* printed in *Letters from America.*

can one know of heaven on earth and not come back to it? I'm afraid I shall slip away from that slithery, murky place you're (I suppose) in now, and return— Ridiculous.

"I continue in a hot noon, under an orange tree. We rose at dawn and walked many miles and swam seven large rivers and picked and ate many oranges and pineapples and drank cocoa-nuts. Now the two 'boys' who carry my luggage are asleep in the shade. They're Fijians of twenty-three or so who know a few words of English. One of them is the finest-made man I've ever seen; like a Greek statue come to life; strong as ten horses. To see him strip and swim a half-flooded river is an immortal sight.

"Last night we stayed in the house of a mountain chief who has spasmodic yearnings after civilisation. When these grow strong, he sends a runner down to the coast to buy any illustrated papers he can find. He knows no English, but he pastes his favourite pictures up round the wall and muses over them. I lectured on them—fragments of the *Sketch* and *Sphere* for several years—to a half-naked reverent audience last night (through my interpreter of course). The Prince of Wales, looking like an Oxford undergraduate, elbows two ladies who display 1911 spring-fashions. A golf champion in a most

contorted position occupies a central place. He is regarded, I fancy, as a rather potent and violent deity. To his left is 'Miss Viola Tree, as Eurydice,' to his right Miss Lillah M'Carthy as Jocasta, looking infinitely Mycenaean. I explained about incest, shortly, and Miss M'C. rose tremendously in Fijian estimation. Why do people like their gods to be so eccentric, always? I fancy I left an impression that she was Mr. H. H. Hilton's (is that right? You're a golfer) mother and wife. It is so hard to explain our civilisation to simple people. Anyhow, I disturbed their theology and elevated Lillah to the top place. How Eurydice came in puzzled them and me. I fancy they regard her as a Holy Ghostess, in some sort.

"It's very perplexing. These people—Samoans and Fijians—are so much nicer, and so *much* better-mannered, than oneself. They are stronger, beautifuller, kindlier, more hospitable and courteous, greater lovers of beauty, and even wittier, than average Europeans. And they are—under our influence—a dying race. We gradually fill their lands with plantations and Indian coolies. The Hawaians, up in the Sandwich Islands, have almost altogether gone, and their arts and music with them, and their

islands are a replica of America. A cheerful thought, that all these places are to become indistinguishable from Denver and Birmingham and Stuttgart, and the people of dress and behaviour precisely like Herr Schmidt, and Mr. Robinson, and Hiram O. Guggenheim. And now they're so . . . it's impossible to describe how far nearer the Kingdom of Heaven—or the Garden of Eden—these good, naked, laughing people are than oneself or one's friends. . . . But I forget. You are an anti-socialist, and I mustn't say a word against our modern industrial system. I beg your pardon.

"I go down to the coast to catch a boat to New Zealand, where I shall post this. Thence to Tahiti, to hunt for lost Gauguins. Then back to barbarism in America. God knows when I shall get home. In the spring, I hope. Is England still there? Forgive this endless scrawl.

"I suppose you're rushing from lunch-party to lunch-party, and dance to dance, and opera to political platform. Won't you come and learn how to make a hibiscus-wreath for your hair, and sail a canoe, and swim two minutes under water catching turtles, and dive forty feet into a waterfall, and climb a cocoanut-palm? It's more worth while."

Sometimes the desire for England and his friends came uppermost. "I'd once thought it necessary to marry," he wrote to Jacques Raverat from Fiji. "I *approve* of marriage for the world. I think you're all quite right, so don't be alarmed. But not for me. I'm too old. The Point of Marriage is Peace—to work in. But can't one get it otherwise? Why, certainly, when one's old. And so I will. I know what things are good: friendship and work and conversation. These I shall have. How one can fill life, if one's energetic and knows how to dig! I have thought of a thousand things to do, in books and poems and plays and theatres and societies and housebuilding and dinner-parties, when I get Home. We shall have fun. Now we have so painfully achieved middle-age, shall we not reap the fruits of that achievement, my dyspeptic friend? By God, yes! Will you come and walk with me in Spain next summer? And will you join me on the Poet's Round?—a walk I've planned. One starts from Charing Cross, in a south-easterly direction, and calls on de la Mare at Anerley, and finds Davies at Sevenoaks—a day's march to Belloc at King's Head, then up to Wibson[1] on the borders of Gloucestershire, back by Stratford, RUGBY, and

[1] Wilfrid Gibson.

the Chilterns, where Masefield and Chesterton dwell. Wouldn't it give one a queer idea of England?

"Three months a year I am going to live with you and Gwen, three with Dudley and Anne, three with the Ranee,[1] and three alone. A perfect life. I almost catch the next boat to 'Frisco at the thought of it." (At this point in the letter there is a constellation of blots, explained as 'Tears of Memory.')

"There is nothing in the world like friendship. And there is no man who has had such friends as I, so many, so fine, so various, so multiform, so prone to laughter, so strong in affection, and so permanent, so trustworthy, so courteous, so stern with vices and so blind to faults or folly, of such swiftness of mind and strength of body, so apt both to make jokes and to understand them. Also their faces are beautiful, and I love them. I repeat a long list of their names every night before I sleep. Friendship is always exciting, and yet always safe. There is no lust in it, and therefore no poison. It is cleaner than love, and older; for children and very old people have friends, but they do not love. It gives more and takes less, it is fine in the enjoying, and without pain when absent, and it leaves only good memo-

[1] His name for his mother.

ries. In love all laughter ends with an ache, but laughter is the very garland on the head of friendship. I will not love, and I will not be loved. But I will have friends round me continually, all the days of my life, and in whatever lands I may be. So we shall laugh and eat and sing, and go great journeys in boats and on foot, and write plays and perform them, and pass innumerable laws taking their money from the rich. . . . I err. I praise too extravagantly, conveying an impression that friendship always gives peace. And even at the moment I feel a hunger, too rending for complete peace, to see all your faces again and to eat food with you."

Home thoughts from abroad of a different order were sent to Miss Nesbitt:—"I see I'm going to have the hell of an uncomfortable life," he wrote. "I want too many different things. I keep now pining after London. I want to talk, talk, talk. Is there anything better in the world than sitting at a table and eating good food and drinking great drink, and discussing everything under the sun with wise and brilliant people? . . . . . .

"Oh but I'm going to have such a time when I get back. I'm going to have the loveliest rooms in King's, and I'm going to spend 5 days a week there, and 3 in London (that's 8, stoopid), and

in King's I'm going to entertain all the mad and lovely people in the world, and I'm never going to sit down to dinner without a philosopher, a poet, a musician, an actress, a dancer, and a bishop at table with me. I'm going to get up such performances as will turn Cambridge upside down. I'm going to have Yeats and Cannan and Craig and Barker to give a lecture each on modern drama. I'm going to have my great play in the Grantchester garden. I'm going—oh, hell, I don't know what I'm going to do—but every morning I shall drift up and down the backs in a punt, discussing anything in the world with anybody who desires."

He left Fiji in December. "Life's been getting madder and madder," he wrote from Auckland on December 17th. "I tumbled into Fiji without a friend or an introduction, and left it a month later amidst the loud grief of the united population, white and black. The two 'boys' (aged 23 or 24) I took with me when I went walking through the centre of the island, to carry my bags, are my sworn and eternal friends. One of them ('Ambele,' under which I, but not you, can recognise 'Abel') was six foot high, very broad, and more perfectly made than any man or statue I have ever seen. His grin stretched from

ear to ear. And he could carry me across rivers (when I was tired of swimming them, for we crossed vast rivers every mile or two) for a hundred yards or so, as I should carry a box of matches. I think of bringing him back with me as a servant or bodyguard to England. He loved me because, though I was far weaker than he, I was far braver. The Fijians are rather cowards. And on precipices I am peculiarly reckless. The boys saved me from rolling off to perdition about thirty times, and respected me for it, though thinking me insane. What would you say if I turned up with two vast cannibal servants, black-skinned and perpetually laughing—all of us attired only in loin-cloths, and red flowers in our hair? I think I should be irresistible.

"Why, precisely, I'm here, I don't know. I seem to have missed a boat somewhere, and I can't get on to Tahiti till the beginning of January. Damn. And I hear that a man got to Tahiti two months ahead of me, and found—and carried off—some Gauguin paintings on glass. DAMN!

"New Zealand turns out to be in the midst of summer, and almost exactly like England. I eat strawberries, large garden strawberries, every day; and it's the middle of December! It

feels curiously unnatural, perverse, like some frightful vice out of Havelock Ellis. I blush and eat secretively. I'll describe New Zealand another day. It's a sort of Fabian England, very upper-middle-class and gentle and happy (after Canada), no poor, and the Government owning hotels and running char-à-bancs. All the women smoke, and dress very badly, and nobody drinks. Everybody seems rather ugly—but perhaps that's compared with the South Seas."

The Englishness of New Zealand made home affairs vivid to him again, and he wrote vehemently to his mother about the Dublin Strike. "I feel wild about Dublin. I always feel in strikes that 'the men are always right,' as a man says in *Clayhanger*. Of course the poor are always right against the rich, though often enough the men are in the wrong over some point of the moment (it's not to be wondered at). But Dublin seems to be one of the clearest cases on record. . . . . When the *Times* begins saying that the employers are in the wrong, they must be very unpardonably and rottenly so indeed. I do hope people are contributing for the wives and children in Dublin. Could you send two guineas in my name? I'll settle when I get

back. But I'd like it done immediately. I expect you will have sent some yourself. . . . . .

"The queer thing [about New Zealand]," he goes on, "is that they've got all the things in the Liberal or mild Fabian programme:—eight hour day (and less), bigger old age pensions, access to the land, minimum wage, insurance, etc., etc., and yet it's not Paradise. The same troubles exist in much the same form (except that there's not much bad poverty). Cost of living is rising quicker than wages. There are the same troubles between unions and employers, and between rich and poor. I suppose there'll be no peace anywhere till the rich are curbed altogether."

On the voyage from New Zealand to Tahiti he made great friends with a Lancashire business man, Mr. Harold Ashworth, who wrote after his death to Mrs. Brooke. The letters show the kind of impression that he made on those who met him at this time. "I am happy to believe," says Mr. Ashworth, "that he and I became real friends, and many a time I would invoke his aid when my rather aggressive Radicalism brought the 'Smoke-room' men at me *en masse*. I never met so entirely likeable a chap, and when I could 'get him going' about his wanderings, or provoke him into discussions about Literature, I was one walking ear! . . . . . I almost wept

to know I could never again see that golden head and kindly smile—'Young Apollo,' I used to dub him in my mind, whilst the fresh wind tossed his hair, and his boyish eyes lit up with pleasure at some of my anecdotes of strange people and places. . . . . Your son was not merely a genius; what is perhaps more important, he had a charm that was literally like Sunshine. To say his manner was *perfect* is putting it quite inadequately. . . . . His memory is blessed by hundreds of men like me who were so fortunate as to meet him and were the better for that happy adventure."

Another friend made on his travels was Reginald Berkeley, who was his chief companion on his excursions in Fiji. Rupert sent him from the s.s. *Niagara* a long letter about the technique of writing. "One can only advise people two or three years younger," he says. "Beyond that, one has forgotten." The end of it shows him insisting on the importance for artists of the attitude which he had recommended for everyone in his letter to Ben Keeling of three years before. "Finally," he says, "I charge you, be kind to life; and do not bruise her with the bludgeon of the *a priori*. Poor dirty woman, she responds to sympathy. Sympathetic imagination with everybody and everything is the artist's one duty. He

should be one with every little clergyman, and the stockbroker's most secret hope should be his hope. In the end, the words of Strindberg's heroine are the only motto, 'The race of man is greatly to be pitied.' Isn't that true? Hatred should be given out sparingly. It's too valuable to use carelessly. And, misused, it prevents understanding. And it is our duty to understand; for if we don't, no one else will."

His next stay was about three months in Tahiti. "I've decided to stay here another month," he wrote to Miss Nesbitt in February, "for two very good reasons: (1) that I haven't enough money to get out, (2) that I've found the most ideal place in the world to live and work in.[1] A wide verandah over a blue lagoon, a wooden pier with deep clear water for diving, and coloured fish that swim between your toes. There also swim between your toes, more or less, scores of laughing brown babies from two years to fourteen. Canoes and boats, rivers, fishing with spear net and line, the most wonderful food in the world—strange fishes and vegetables perfectly cooked. Europe slides from me terrifyingly. . . . . Will it come to your having to

[1] This was at Mataiea, about 30 miles from the chief town, Papeete.

fetch me? The boat's ready to start; the brown lovely people in their bright clothes are gathered on the old wharf to wave her away. Everyone has a white flower behind their ear. Mamua has given me one. Do you know the significance of a white flower worn over the ear? A white flower over the right ear means 'I am looking for a sweetheart.' And a white flower over the left ear means 'I have found a sweetheart.' And a white flower over each ear means 'I have one sweetheart, and am looking for another.' A white flower over each ear, my dear, is dreadfully the most fashionable way of adorning yourself in Tahiti.

"*Bon voyage* to the travellers. Good luck to everybody else. Love to the whole world. Tonight we will put scarlet flowers in our hair, and sing strange slumbrous South Sea songs to the concertina, and drink red French wine, and dance, and bathe in a soft lagoon by moonlight, and eat great squelchy tropical fruits, custard-apples, papaia, pomegranate, mango, guava and the rest. *Urana.* I have a million lovely and exciting things to tell you—but not now."

How thoroughly he became imbued with the life, the feeling, and the philosophy of the islands, appears from a sociological epistle which he wrote

to Jacques Raverat after his return to England. "As for Land, my Frog, we must have a great deal held in common. It is good for men to work *of* themselves, but not too much *for* themselves. In my part of the world, if we want to build a canoe, we all put wreaths in our hair, and take the town hatchet, and Bill's axe, and each his own hunting-knife, and have a bit of pig each for luck, and a drink, and go out. And as we go we sing. And when we have got to a large tree we sit round it. And the two biggest men take the axes and hit the tree in turn. And the rest of us beat our hands rhythmically and sing a song saying 'That is a tree—cut down the tree—we will make a boat,' and so on. And when those two are tired, they drink and sit, and other two take their places . . . and later the hollowing of the canoe, and the fashioning of an out-rigger, and the making of benches and the shaping of paddles. And when all's done, we go home and sing all night, and dance a great deal. For we have another canoe.

"And when you have got a lot of other Goddites together and started to build a Cathedral, why, you'll see what fun it is working together, instead of in a dirty little corner alone, suspicious, greedy, competitive, hating all the world, like

a modern artist or a French peasant or a money-lender or a golfer."

He had begun writing verse again, and in the 'wide verandah' he wrote or finished *Tiare Tahiti,*[1] *Retrospect,* and the *Great Lover,*[2] which he sent me (he had appointed me his 'literary agent or grass-executor' during his travels)[3] for *New Numbers.* This publication had been planned in July by correspondence with Lascelles Abercrombie, John Drinkwater and Wilfrid Gibson. They meant at first to call it *The Gallows Garland,* after The Gallows, Abercrombie's cottage in Gloucestershire, from which it was to be published; and Rupert thought the change very stupid. He had sketched the contents of the first number. Abercrombie was to contribute a short epic on *Asshurbanipal and Nebuchadnezzar,* Drinkwater an ode called *The Sonority of God,* and Gibson two narrative

[1] A postscript to a letter to his mother elucidates a line in this poem. "They call me *Pupure* here—it means 'fair' in Tahitian—because I have fair hair!"

[2] Speculation has been aroused by the line in this poem praising 'the comfortable smell of friendly fingers.' When asked *whose* fingers, he said his nurse's; and admitted that it might have been the soap.

[3] He took large views of my duties. "Damn it," he had written from Vancouver, "what's the good of a friend if he can't sit down and write off a few poems for one at a pinch? That's what I count on your doing, if the editors press."

I hope this note will not start a vain hunt for *spuria* among the published poems.

poems, *Poor Bloody Bill* and *The Brave Poor Thing, from a series named Gas-Stoves.* Rupert himself did not expect to manage more than one sonnet, to be entitled *Oh dear! Oh dear!* The first number came out in February 1914; and after three more issues it was discontinued because of the war, before his death had broken the fair companionship.

To illustrate his method of work at this time, it may be of interest to print the first draft of the *Psychical Research* sonnet, with his corrections:

, when we're beyond the sun,
Not with vain tears we'll beat, when all is done,
We'll beat
Unheard on the substantial doors, nor tread
aimless
Those dusty high-roads of the wandering Dead
Plaintive for Earth; but rather turn and run
Remembering Earth. We'll turn, I think, and run
Down some close-covered by-way of the air,
Some
Or low sweet alley between wind and wind,
Stoop under faint gleams, thread the shadows, find
Pull down the shadows over us, and find
Some
A whispering ghost-forgotten nook, and there
Spend in pure converse our eternal day;
Think each in each, immediately wise;

Learn all we lacked before, hear, know, and say
What this tumultuous body now denies;
And feel, who have laid our groping hands away;
And see, no longer blinded by our eyes.[1]

But to return to Tahiti. "I've been ill," he wrote to me on March 7th. "I got some beastly coral-poisoning into my legs, and a local microbe on the top of that, and made the places worse by neglecting them, and sea-bathing all day (which turns out to be the worst possible thing). I was in the country when it came on bad, and tried native remedies, which took all the skin off, and produced such a ghastly appearance that I hurried into town. . . . . I've got over it now, and feel very spry. I'm in a hovel at the back of the hotel, and contemplate the yard. The extraordinary life of the place flows round and through my room—for here no one, man or woman, scruples to come through one's room at any moment, if it happens to be a short cut. By day nothing much happens in the yard—except

[1] Though there are no changes in the concluding lines, I print them for the sake of a parallel, shown me by John Drinkwater, in Andrew Marvell's *Dialogue between Soul and Body,* where Soul says:

O, who shall from this dungeon raise
A soul enslaved so many ways,
With bolts of bones, that fettered stands
In feet, and manacled in hands;
Here blinded with an eye, and there
Deaf with the drumming of an ear?

when a horse tried to eat a hen the other afternoon. But by night, after ten, it's filled with flitting figures of girls, with wreaths of white flowers, keeping assignations. Occasionally two rivals meet, and fill the darker corners with cursings and scratchings. Or occasionally a youth intercepts a faithless lady, and has a pretty operatic scene under my window. It is all—all Papeete—like a Renaissance Italy, with the venom taken out. No, simpler, light-come and light-go, passionate and forgetful, like children, and all the time South Pacific, that is to say unmalicious and good-tempered. . . . . .

"I really do feel a little anchorless. I shall be glad to be back among you all, and tied to somewhere in England. I'll never, never, never go to sea again. All I want in life is a cottage, and leisure to write supreme poems and plays. I can't do it in this vagabondage."

I don't know what happened between this letter and the next to produce the gloom it shows about his work. He had always, at school and onwards, been apt to have fits of thinking that he would never write again, but this time the foreboding seems more serious than usual. He begins cheerfully 'some time in March': "It's *so* funny; getting a letter of January 25, and not having heard anything from anybody since Octo-

ber. Your letter of November, announcing your marriage with [someone very improbable]; your kindly Christmas information about the disastrous fire in Bilton Road and the disposal of the Ranee's and Alfred's cinders; your New Year's epistle announcing your, Wilfrid's and Albert's Knighthoods; the later letter that recounted your conversations with Shaw, the Earthquake, the War with Germany, the Chinese Ballet, Stravinsky's comic opera, the new El Greco, Gilbert [Cannan]'s trial, Masefield's latest knock-about farce, Arthur Benson's duel . . . all these I have not yet had. They await me in 'Frisco. So I take up the threads at the 25th of January—now itself some way down in the heap of yesterday's seven thousand years—and study them rather confusedly. Flecker—Wilfrid—poetry—plays—Moulin d'Or—*Hullo Tango!* they all stir, these names, some dusty memories away in the back of my subconsciousness. Somewhere they must have meant something to me, in another life. A vision of taxis slides across the orange and green of the sunset. For a moment the palms dwindle to lamp-posts.

> So a poor ghost beside his misty streams
> Is haunted by strange doubts and fugitive dreams,
> Hints of a pre-Lethean life, of men,
> Rocks, stars, and skin, things unintelligible,

And the sun on waving grass—he knows not when,
And feet that ran, but where, he cannot tell.[1]

(You recognise the master-hand?)

"I must come back and see if I can take to it again. Plan out a life for me for next year, Eddie. (Here follows another sketch for living at Cambridge, much the same as the one already given.) The other half of the week I shall reside with you—I warn you.

"But, my dear, I doubt if you'll have me. The Game is Up, Eddie. If I've gained facts through knocking about with Conrad characters in a Gauguin *entourage,*—I've lost a dream or two. I tried to be a poet. And because I'm a clever writer, and because I was forty times as sensitive as anybody else, I succeeded a little. *Es ist vorüber; es ist unwiederruflich zu Ende.* I am what I came out here to be. Hard, quite, quite hard. I have become merely a minor character in a Kipling story.

"I'll never be able to write anything more, I think; or perhaps I can do plays of a sort. . . . I think I'll have to manage a theatre. I feel very energetic; and very capable. Is that a great come-down? I think that what I really feel like is living. I want to talk and talk and

[1] An unrevised form of part of the sonnet *Hauntings.*

talk . . . and in the intervals have extraordinary adventures. Perhaps this, too, is a come-down. But haven't I, at 26, reached the age when one should begin to learn? An energy that had rushed on me with the cessation of my leprous skin-disease, and the approaching end of six months' peace of soul, is driving me furiously on. This afternoon I go fishing in a canoe with a native girl on a green and purple reef. Tonight from ten to two, spearing fish in the same lagoon by torchlight. Tomorrow at dawn, up into the mountains on foot with a mad Englishman, four natives, and a half-caste, to a volcanic lake in the interior. There we build a house and stay for two days. The natives return, and the M.E. and myself push on for and pass down to the other coast. Perhaps we get it. Perhaps not.

"In any case we hope to see some ghosts—they abound in the interior. They come to you by night, and as you watch them their bellies burst, and their entrails fall to the ground, and their eyes—unpupilled balls of white—fall out too, and they stink and shine. This morning I've been reading *The Triumph of Time,* and *Bartholomew Fair*. . . . . .

"Learning, learning, learning. . . . Is there anything else to do except *taste*? Will you come with me to Morocco, Persia, Russia, Egypt,

Abyssinia, and the Aran Islands? I'm afraid I shan't be able to settle down at home. It'll be an advantage that I can come to England through America. For then, I'll find it so lovely that I won't be hankering after sunlight and brown people and rainbow-coloured fish. At least, I won't for some months, or a year.

"I'll learn at home, a bit. There's so much to learn there—if only one's sensible enough to know it. And I feel hard enough to make the attempt. I want to love my friends and hate my enemies, again. Both greatly—but not *too* much. Which brings me round to [an enemy] and Clubs. . . . . I want a club to take an occasional stranger into, for a drink, and to read the papers in, and sometimes to have a quiet meal in. Where do you think I should go? I want somewhere I needn't always be spick and span in, and somewhere I don't have to pay a vast sum. Alas, why are there no decent clubs? What do the jolly people all do? I want to belong to the same club as de la Mare. Where does de la Mare go? To Anerley, S.E., I suppose.

There was once a-metrist of Anerley,
Whose neighbours were mundane but mannerly.
They don't cavil the least
At a stray anapaest,
But they *do* bar his spondees in Anerley.

I'll post this and send off my bundle of MSS. from 'Frisco."

He left Tahiti in April. "Last night," he wrote on the steamer, "I looked for the Southern Cross as usual, and looked for it in vain—like the moon for Omar Khayyam—it had gone down below the horizon. It is still shining and wheeling for those good brown people in the islands—and they're laughing and kissing and swimming and dancing beneath it—but for me it is set; and I don't know that I shall ever see it again. It's queer. I was sad at heart to leave Tahiti. But I resigned myself to the vessel, and watched the green shores and rocky peaks fade with hardly a pang. I had told so many of those that loved me, so often, 'oh yes, I'll come back—next year perhaps, or the year after'—that I suppose I'd begun to believe it myself. It was only yesterday, when I knew that the Southern Cross had left me, that I suddenly realised I had left behind those lovely places and lovely people, perhaps for ever. I reflected that there was surely nothing else like them in this world, and very probably nothing in the next, and that I was going far away from gentleness and beauty and kindliness, and the smell of the lagoons, and the thrill of that dancing, and the scarlet of the flamboyants, and the white and gold of other

flowers; and that I was going to America, which is full of harshness and hideous sights, and ugly people, and civilisation, and corruption, and bloodiness, and all evil. So I wept a little, and very sensibly went to bed. . . . . .

"Certain reprehensible corners of my heart whisper to me, 'There's a village in Samoa, with the moonlight on the beach'—or 'I've heard of a hill in Japan'—or 'one said there's an inn in Thibet over a sheer precipice'—or 'the Victoria Nyanza is an attractive lake'—or 'that trail in the North-West up the Mackenzie—Morris said he'd go whenever I wanted'—or 'I wonder if it's true about that flower in the Andes that smells like no other flower upon earth, and when once a man has smelt it he can't but return there to live in those hills in the end, though he come back from the ends of the earth.' . . . . . .

"I'll be Wordsworth's lark, that soars but doesn't roam, true to the kindred points of heaven and home. These scraps of English poetry start whispering within me—that means I'm North of the Equator, doesn't it? It's a good sign, perhaps. English thoughts are waking in me. They'll fetch me back. Call me home, I pray you. I've been away long enough. I'm older than I was. I've left bits of me about —some of my hair in Canada, and one skin in

Honolulu, and another in Fiji, and a bit of a third in Tahiti, and half a tooth in Samoa, and bits of my heart all over the place. I'm deader than I was. *Partir, c'est toujours mourir un peu* —you know that admirable and true proverb, don't you? A little old Frenchman, a friend of mine, told it me as we leaned over the rail and watched the waving crowds and the red roofs and the hills and the clouds dwindle and vanish. He was going home to France for a year for his health. 'Home,' he'd be angry at that. *'Mon* home *c'est ici,'* he told me repeatedly. He is married to a native woman these fifteen years—no children of his own, but plenty adopted. She was so much finer than a white woman, he sighed—so lovely, so faithful, so competent, so charming and happy, and so extraordinarily intelligent. I told him what Tagore told me about white women compared with Indian, and he gave me his observations, and we entirely agreed, and forgot our sorrows in inventing bilingual insults to the swarms of ugly American and Colonial girls on board."

"Oh, God! Oh, God!" his next letter to me began, from San Francisco in April. "How I hate civilisation and houses and trams and collars." But the shock was tempered to him. "I've found good friends in the quieter parts of

this region, who live in a garden filled with roses and hyacinths and morning-glory. So I'll rest a day or two and try to get over the effects of my first re-entry into civilisation. And then I'll sneak away East and come home. I want to live in a hut by a river and pretend I'm Polynesian. Will you come and see me o' week's ends? . . . . . Oh! Oh! I am old as death. *Urania!*" And from the train: "I read books on *Indirect Primaries,*[1] just to get the South Seas out of my blood. One must remember one has trousers on again. I had a faint thought of going to Mexico. But I guess it won't be much of a war. You'll be vanishing for Whitsuntide soon. A yachting trip to Ulster? I do hope you're going to let the Orangemen slit all the priests' throats first; and then shoot *them*. I'll enlist on either side, any day. Your gnostic. RUPERT."

"It's eleven months," he wrote to Miss Nesbitt from Arizona, "that I've not been looked after, and my clothes are in an awful state, and my hair not cut, and I rarely shave. I'm so tired of it. Comprenny? Do you get me? I shall—(prepare your ears and hold tight)—shall sail from New York on June 6th, and by June 15th I shall

[1] He was also reading Boswell. "I've discovered," he wrote, "that Dr. Johnson is the only man I love. An Englishman, by God!"

be in London. My dear, one thing I would implore you. It's very silly. But don't tell anybody the exact day I'm coming back. It's my fancy to blow in on them unexpected—just to wander into Raymond Buildings and hear Eddie squeak 'Oh, *my dear,* I thought you were in Tahiti!' It's *awfly* silly and romantic, but the thought does give me the keenest and most exquisite pleasure. Don't give away one of the first poets in England—but there is in him still a very very small portion that's just a little childish."

"I have such news," he wrote in his next letter. "It begins with Maurice Browne[1] and his wife going to Europe a week sooner than I had planned to. We squabbled, I saying they should defer their departure a week for the pleasure of going with me; they, ridiculously, that I should hasten my leaving this land some seven days for the honour of their companionship. Neither side would yield; so we parted in wrath. They pettily, I with some dignity. Coming here, I found two engagements fallen through; and last night I dreamed very vividly that I arrived in England, and telephoned to everybody I knew, and they were *awfully* nice, and then went round and saw them, and they were *lovely*. Friends I

[1] Director of the Little Theatre at Chicago.

had known long ago, between whom and myself evil and pain has come, greeted me in the old first way; and other friends who have stayed friends were wonderfully the same; and there were new friends. . . . . I woke laughing and crying. I felt I *must* get back. I telephoned to Browne, flew to some agents, and in consequence I sail from New York on May 29th, and reach Plymouth—oh blessed name, oh loveliness! Plymouth—was there ever so sweet and droll a sound? Drake's Plymouth, English Western Plymouth, city where men speak softly, and things are sold for shillings, not for dollars; and there is love, and beauty, and old houses; and beyond which there are little fields, very green, bounded by small piled walls of stone; and behind them—I know it—the brown and black, splintered, haunted moor. By that the train shall go up; by Dartmouth, where my brother was—I will make a litany; by Torquay, where Verrall stayed; and by Paignton, where I have walked in the rain; past Ilsington, where John Ford was born, and Appledore, in the inn of which I wrote a poem against a commercial traveller; by Dawlish, of which John Keats sang; within sight of Widdicombe, where old Uncle Tom Cobley rode a mare; not a dozen miles from John Galsworthy at Manaton; within sight al-

most of that hill at Drewsteignton on which I lay out all one September night, crying—and to Exeter, and to Ottery St. Mary where Coleridge sojourned; and across Wiltshire, where men built and sang many centuries before the Aquila. Oh noble train, oh glorious and forthright and English train! I will look round me at the English faces, and out at the English fields, and I will pray——reach Plymouth, as I was saying when I was interrupted, on Friday, June 5th."

I got wind of his design to arrive like a bolt from the blue, and represented the disaster it would be if he came and found the door closed against him. He yielded, and at 2.45 a.m. on June 6th (for the forthright English train was very late) Denis Browne and I met him at Paddington.

VI

All the old threads were picked up at once. "To the poor stay-at-home," writes Walter de la Mare, "the friend who placidly reappeared from the ends of the earth seemed as little changed as one who gaily and laughingly goes to bed and gaily and laughingly comes down next morning after a perfectly refreshing sleep." He was still exactly the 'Young Apollo' of Mrs. Cornford's

Cambridge epigram; though the glint of quite peculiarly real shining gold that had always been in his hair had been tanned out of it by the Southern sun; and though one felt, in a hundred indefinable ways, that he was now more than ever 'prepared'; not, as it turned out, for the 'long littleness of life,' but rather for its brief greatness.

The morning after his return he hurried off to Rugby for a few days with his mother. Then he had six crowded, happy weeks, mostly in London, seeing old friends and making new ones—including Lascelles Abercrombie, whom he met for the first time, though they had long been friends by proxy and by correspondence. His shyness, which had always been a part of his rather curious modesty and 'unspoiltness,' was wearing off; and I am told he confessed, on being asked, that it had now dawned upon him for the first time that when he came into a room where there were new people the chances were that they would like him, rather than not.

At the end of July came the war-cloud—and then the war. He has described his feelings when he heard the news in the essay *An Unusual Young Man* (the setting is imaginary—he was not returning from a cruise, but staying with the Cornfords in Norfolk). At first he was just un-

happy and bewildered. "I'm so uneasy—subconsciously," he wrote. "All the vague perils of the time—the world seems so dark—and I'm vaguely frightened. I feel hurt to think that France may suffer. And it hurts, too, to think that Germany may be harmed by Russia. And I'm anxious that England may act rightly. I can't *bear* it if she does wrong."

"I've just been to a music-hall," he wrote early in August. "It was pretty full. Miss C. Loftus was imitating somebody I saw infinite years ago—Elsie Janis—in her imitation of a prehistoric figure called Frank Tinney. God! how far away it all seemed. Then a dreadful cinematographic reproduction of a hand drawing patriotic things—Harry Furniss it was, funny pictures of a soldier and a sailor (at the time I suppose dying in Belgium), a caricature of the Kaiser, greeted with a perfunctory hiss—nearly everyone sat silent. Then a scribbled message was shown: 'War declared with Austria 11,9.' There was a volley of quick, low hand-clapping—more a signal of recognition than anything else. Then we dispersed into Trafalgar Square and bought midnight War editions. . . . In all these days I haven't been so near tears; there was such tragedy and dignity in the people. . . . . .

"If there's any good in anything I've done, it's made by the beauty and goodness of . . . a few I've known. All these people at the front who are fighting muddledly enough for some idea called England—it's some faint shadowing of goodness and loveliness they have in their hearts to die for."

For the first day or two he did not realise that he must fight—one of his ideas was to go to France and help get in the crops. But before we had been at war a week he was back in London, seeking out the best way to serve as a soldier. "I've spent a fortnight," he wrote on August 24th, "in chasing elusive employment about. For a time I got drilled on the chance of getting into a London corps as a private, but now I really think I shall get a commission. Territorial probably, through Cambridge. The whole thing, and the insupportable stress of this time, tired me to a useless rag."

Early in September Winston Churchill offered him a commission in the Royal Naval Division, then forming; and he and Denis Browne [1] joined

[1] I may here briefly commemorate William Denis Browne, whose death at 26 left no monument of his powers, except a few songs of great beauty. He was a musician of rare promise and complete equipment; and I have high authority for saying that his grasp of the foundations and tendencies of modern music was unique. I cannot here describe the singular charm of his character and personality. Enough that he never failed in honour, or in kindness,

the Anson Battalion on September 27th. I saw them off to Betteshanger Camp from Charing Cross—excited and a little shy, like two new boys going to school—happy and handsome in their new uniforms, and specially proud of their caps, which had very superior badges.

The Anson soon went to Chatham for musketry, and there he wrote: "Often enough I feel a passing despair. I mean what you meant—the gulf between non-combatants and combatants. Yet it's not that—it's the withdrawal of combatants into a special seclusion and reserve. We're under a curse—or a blessing, or a vow to be different. The currents of our lives are interrupted. What is it . . . I know—yes. The central purpose of my life, the aim and end of it now, the thing God wants of me, is to get good at beating Germans. That's sure. But that isn't what it *was*. What it was, I never knew; and God knows I never found it. But it reached out deeply for other things than my present need. . . . There *is* the absence. Priests and criminals—we're both—are celibates . . . and so I

or in good sense, or in humour; and there were many who loved him.

He was a friend of Rupert's at Rugby, at Cambridge, and in London; last, his brother-in-arms; and he cared for him, as will be told, in his mortal illness. Six weeks afterwards, on the 4th of June, he followed him, fighting with high gallantry in the attack on the Turkish trenches before Krithia.

feel from my end sometimes that it *is* a long, long way to Tipperary. And yet, all's well. I'm the happiest person in the world."

There were humours in the life; for instance, a false alarm of invasion at Chatham, when "elderly men rushed about pulling down swords from the messroom walls, and fastened them on with safety-pins"; or this incident in the day's routine: "I had to make an inventory the other day of all their kit, to compare with what they *should* have. I soon found that questions about some of the articles on the lists were purely academic. 'How many handkerchiefs have you?' The first two men were prompted to say 'none.' The third was called Cassidy. 'How many phwat, sorr?' 'Handkerchiefs.'—'?'—'Handkerchiefs, man, handkerchiefs.' (*In a hoarse whisper to the Petty Officer*) 'Phwat does he mane?' P.O. (*in a stage whisper*), 'Ter blow yer nose with, yer bloody fool.' Cassidy (*rather indignant*), 'None, sorr!' They were dears, and very strong, some of them."

On the 4th of October they sailed for Antwerp. When it was all over, and he was having a little leave in London, he wrote to a friend: "I've been extremely slack and sleepy these last few days. I think it was the reaction after the excitement. Also I caught *conjunctivitis,* alias

pink-eye, in some of the foul places we slept in; and my eyes have been swollen, red, unlovely, exuding a thick plum-tree gum, and very painful. I *hope* they're getting better. . . . . It's only a fortnight ago! We were pulled out of bed at 5 a.m. on the Sunday, and told that we started at 9. We marched to Dover, highly excited, only knowing that we were bound for Dunkirk, and supposing that we'd stay there quietly, training, for a month. Old ladies waved handkerchiefs, young ladies gave us apples, and old men and children cheered, and we cheered back, and I felt very elderly and sombre, and full of thought of how human life was a flash between darknesses, and that *x* per cent of those who cheered would be blown into another world within a few months; and they all seemed to me so innocent and pathetic and noble, and my eyes grew round and tear-stained. . . . . [Arrived at Dunkirk] we sat in a great empty shed a quarter of a mile long, waiting for orders. After dark the senior officers rushed round and informed us that we were going to Antwerp, that our train was sure to be attacked, and that if we got through we'd have to sit in trenches till we were wiped out. So we all sat under lights writing last letters, a very tragic and amusing affair. It *did* bring home to me how very futile and unfinished

my life was. I felt so angry. I had to imagine, supposing I *was* killed. There was nothing except a vague gesture of good-bye to you and my mother and a friend or two. I seemed so remote and barren and stupid. I seemed to have missed everything.

"We *weren't* attacked that night in the train. So we got out at Antwerp and marched through the streets, and everyone cheered and flung themselves on us, and gave us apples and chocolate and flags and kisses, and cried *Vivent les Anglais* and 'Heep! Heep! Heep!'

"We got out to a place called Vieux Dieux (or something like it) passing refugees and Belgian soldiers by millions. Every mile the noises got louder, immense explosions and detonations. We stopped in the town square at Vieux Dieux; five or six thousand British troops, a lot of Belgians, guns going through, transport-waggons, motorcyclists, orderlies on horses, staff officers, and the rest. An extraordinary and thrilling confusion. As it grew dark the thunders increased, and the sky was lit by extraordinary glares. We were all given entrenching tools. Everybody looked worried. Suddenly our battalion was marched round the corner out of the din, through an old gate in the immense wild garden of a recently-deserted villa-château. There

we had to sleep. On the rather dirty and wild-looking sailors trudged, over lawns, through orchards, and across pleasaunces. Little pools glimmered through the trees, and deserted fountains; and round corners one saw, faintly, occasional Cupids and Venuses—a scattered company of rather bad statues—gleaming quietly. The sailors dug their latrines in the various rose-gardens, and lay down to sleep—but it was bitter cold—under the shrubs. By two the shells had got unpleasantly near, and some message came. So up we got—frozen and sleepy—and toiled off through the night. By dawn we got into trenches—very good ones—and relieved Belgians.

"This is *very* dull. And it doesn't really reflect my state of mind. For when I think back on it, my mind is filled with various disconnected images and feelings. And if I could tell you these fully, you *might* find it wonderful, or at least queer. There's the excitement in the trenches (we weren't attacked seriously in our part) with people losing their heads and fussing and snapping. It's queer to see the people who *do* break under the strain of danger and responsibility. It's always the rotten ones. Highly sensitive people don't, queerly enough. I was relieved to find I was incredibly brave! I don't know how I should behave if shrapnel were

bursting over me and knocking the men round me to pieces. But for risks and nerves and fatigues I was all right. That's cheering.

"And there's the empty blue sky and the peaceful village and country scenery, and nothing of war to see except occasional bursts of white smoke, very lazy and quiet, in the distance. But to hear—incessant thunder, shaking buildings and ground, and you and everything; and above, recurrent wailings, very thin and queer, like lost souls, crossing and recrossing in the emptiness—nothing to be seen. Once or twice a lovely glittering aeroplane, very high up, would go over us; and then the shrapnel would be turned on it, and a dozen quiet little curls of white smoke would appear round the creature—the whole thing like a German woodcut, very quaint and peaceful and unreal.

"But the retreat drowned all these impressions. We stole away from the trenches, across half Antwerp, over the Scheldt, and finally entrained in the last train left, at 7.30 next morning. The march through those deserted suburbs, mile on mile, with never a living being, except our rather ferocious-looking sailors stealing sulkily along. The sky was lit by burning villages and houses; and after a bit we got to the land by the river, where the Belgians had let all the petrol out of

the tanks and fired it. Rivers and seas of flames leaping up hundreds of feet, crowned by black smoke that covered the entire heavens. It lit up houses wrecked by shells, dead horses, demolished railway-stations, engines that had been taken up with their lines and signals, and all twisted round and pulled out, as a bad child spoils a toy. . . . . The glare was like hell. We passed on, out of that, across a pontoon bridge built on boats. Two German spies tried to blow it up while we were on it. They were caught and shot. We went on through the dark. The refugees and motor-buses and transport and Belgian troops grew thicker. After about a thousand years it was dawn. The motor-buses indicated that we were bound for Hammersmith, and might be allowed to see *Potash and Perlmutter.*"

Another letter, written on Christmas Day to Russell Loines of New York, perhaps his greatest friend among his kind American hosts, shows how deeply the sight of the refugees had moved him. "I started a long letter to you in August and September, in my scraps of time; a valuable letter, full of information about the war and the state of mind of pacifists and others. The Germans have it now. It went in my luggage to Antwerp, and there was left. Whether it was burnt or captured, I can't be sure. But it was

in a tin box, with—damn it!—a lot of my manuscript. And it was fairly heavily shelled.

"I don't know if you heard of my trip to Antwerp. A queer picnic. They say we saved the Belgian army, and most of the valuable things in the town—stores and ammunition, I mean. With luck, we might have kept the line fifty miles forward of where it is. However, we at last got away—most of us. It really was a very mild experience; except the thirty miles march out through the night and the blazing city. Antwerp that night was like several different kinds of hell—the broken houses and dead horses lit up by an infernal glare. The refugees were the worst sight. The German policy of frightfulness had succeeded so well, that out of that city of half a million, when it was decided to surrender Antwerp, not ten thousand would stay. They put their goods on carts, barrows, perambulators, anything. Often the carts had no horses, and they just stayed there in the street, waiting for a miracle. There were all the country refugees, too, from the villages, who had been coming through our lines all day and half the night. I'll never forget that white-faced, endless procession in the night, pressed aside to let the military—us—pass, crawling forward at some hundred yards an hour, quite hopeless, the old men cry-

ing, and the women with hard drawn faces. What a crime!—and I gather they've announced their intention of *keeping* Belgium if they can.

"England is remarkable. I wish I had the time to describe it. But this job keeps one so darned tired, and so stupid, that I haven't the words. There are a few people who've been so anti-war before, or so suspicious of diplomacy, that they feel rather out of the national feeling. But it's astonishing to see how the 'intellectuals' have taken on new jobs. No, not astonishing; but impressive. Masefield drills hard in Hampstead, and told me, with some pride, a month ago, that he was a Corporal, and *thought* he was going to be promoted to Sergeant soon. Cornford is no longer the best Greek scholar in Cambridge. He recalled that he was a very good shot in his youth, and is now a Sergeant-Instructor of Musketry. I'm here. My brother is a 2nd Lieutenant in the Post Office Rifles. He was one of three great friends at King's. The second is Intelligence Officer in H.M.S. *Vengeance,* Chan nel Patrol. The third is buried near Cambrai. Gilbert Murray and Walter Raleigh rise at six every day to line hedgerows in the dark, and 'advance in rushes' across the Oxford meadows.

"Among the other officers in this Division

whom I know are two young Asquiths;[1] an Australian professional pianist[2] who twice won the Diamond Sculls; a New Zealander[3] who was fighting in Mexico and walked 300 miles to the coast to get a boat when he heard of the War; a friend of mine, Denis Browne—Cambridge—who is one of the best young English musicians and an extremely brilliant critic; a youth lately through Eton and Balliol,[4] who is the most brilliant man they've had in Oxford for ten years; a young and very charming American called John Bigelow Dodge, who turned up to 'fight for the right'—I could extend the list. It's all a terrible tragedy. And yet, in its details, it's great fun. And—apart from the tragedy—I've never felt happier or better in my life than in those days in Belgium. And now I've the feeling of anger at a seen wrong—Belgium—to make me happier and more resolved in my work. I know that whatever happens, I'll be doing some good, fighting to prevent *that*."

"I hope to get through," he wrote about the same time to Mrs. Arnold Toynbee. "I'll have such a lot to say and do afterwards. Just now

[1] Brigadier-General Arthur Asquith, D.S.O., and his brother Herbert.
[2] F. S. Kelly, killed in action.
[3] Brigadier-General Bernard Freyberg, V.C., D.S.O.
[4] Patrick Shaw-Stewart, killed in action.

I'm rather miserable, because most of my school-friends are wounded, or 'wounded and missing,' or dead. Perhaps our sons will live the better for it all. I knew of yours, I was very glad. It must be good to have a son. When they told us at Dunkirk that we were all going to be killed in Antwerp, if not on the way there, I didn't think much (as I'd expected) what a damned fool I was not to have written more, and done various things better, and been less selfish. I merely thought 'what *Hell* it is that I shan't have any children—any sons.' I thought it over and over, quite furious, for some hours. And we were barely even under fire, in the end!"

"There's a lot to talk about," he told Jacques Raverat, "though I'm rather beyond talking. Yes, we *are* insular. Did you hear of the British private who had been through the fighting from Mons to Ypres, and was asked what he thought of all his experiences? He said, 'What I don't like about this 'ere b—— Europe is all these b—— pictures of Jesus Christ and His relations, behind b—— bits of glawss.' [1] It seems to me to express perfectly that insularity and cheerful atheism which are the chief characteristics of my race.

[1] This was a story of Julian Grenfell's about one of his men, which I had passed on to Rupert.

"All the same, though myself cheerful, insular, and an atheist, I'm largely dissatisfied with the English, just now. The good ones are all right. And it's curiously far away from us (if we haven't the Belgians in memory as I have). But there's a ghastly sort of apathy over half the country. And I really think large numbers of male people don't want to die. Which is odd. I've been praying for a German raid. . . . . .

"My mind's gone stupid with drill and arranging about the men's food. It's all good fun. I'm rather happy. I've a restful feeling that all's going well and I'm not harming anyone, and probably even doing good. A queer new feeling. The only horror is that I want to marry in a hurry and get a child, before I vanish. . . . . . There's the question: to ponder in my sleeping-bag, between the thoughts on the attack and calculations about the boots of the platoon. Insoluble: and the weeks slip on. It'll end in my muddling that, as I've muddled everything else."

After they got back from Antwerp, there was a tiresome period of re-shuffling among the different battalions; but by the middle of December, Rupert, Denis Browne, Arthur Asquith, Patrick Shaw-Stewart, Bernard Freyberg and the rest were reunited at Blandford Camp in the

'Hood,' where there were other officers who were either friends already or belonged to conterminous sets; so that a pleasant family part was soon established. The life was strenuous, but not eventful. "I spend Christmas," [1] he wrote, "in looking after drunken stokers. One of them has been drunk since 7 a.m.; he neither eats nor drinks, but dances a complicated step up and down his hut, singing 'How happy I am, how happy I am'—a short, fat, inelegant man, in stockinged feet. What wonders we are! There's no news—occasional scares. On Wednesday I (don't tell a soul) started a sonnet. What a fall!"

The five sonnets called '1914' had been coming for some time, and were finished at Rugby when he went there for a few days' leave just after Christmas. "These proofs have come," he wrote from Canford Manor on January 24th. "My muse, panting all autumn under halberd and cuirass, could but falter these syllables through her vizor. God, they're in the rough, these five camp-children—4 and 5 are good though, and there are phrases in the rest.[2]

[1] He had telegraphed just before, to a trusty friend, "Send mince-pies for sixty men and a few cakes immediately."

[2] "I think *reading* in war-time right enough," he wrote to Miss Pye from the Mediterranean. "But writing requires a longer period of serenity, a more certainly undisturbed subconsciousness. If the S.C.'s turbulent, one's draught from it is opaque. Witness the first three sonnets."

"Last night I slept between sheets, and this morning I lay an hour in a hot bath, and so was late for a breakfast of pheasant and sausages and the divinest coffee. Now I sit over a great fire of wood in the hall of a house built by Vanbrugh, with a Scuola di Bellini above me, smoking and reading and writing.

"I've been peacefully reading up the country-side all the morning. Where our huts are was an Iberian fort against the Celts—and Celtish against Romans—and Roman against Saxons. . . . Just over the hills is that tower where a young Astronomer watched the stars, and a Lady watched the Astronomer.[1] By Tarrant Hinton, two miles North, George Bubb Dodington lived and reigned and had his salon. In Tarrant Crawford, two miles South, a Queen lies buried. Last week we attacked some of the New Army in Banbury Rings—an ancient fort where Arthur defeated the Saxons in—what year? Where I lay on my belly cursing the stokers for their slowness, Guinevere sat, and wondered if she'd see Arthur and Lancelot return from the fight, or both, or neither, and pictured how they'd look; and then fell a-wondering which, if it came to the point, she'd prefer to see."

"The world's going well," he wrote at this time

[1] See Thomas Hardy's *Two on a Tower*.

to Jacques Raverat: "better than it did when we were younger. And a Frenchman is the one person in the world with something to be proud of, these days."

VII

On January 29th he came to London to recover from a rather bad attack of influenza, staying first at Gray's Inn and then at 10 Downing Street. I saw him for the last time on February 25th, when the King reviewed the Naval Division at Blandford before their departure for the Dardanelles. The secret of where they were going was just out, and everyone was wild with excitement and joy. "It's too wonderful for belief," he wrote to Miss Asquith. "I had not imagined Fate could be so benign. I almost suspect her. Perhaps we shall be held in reserve, out of sight, on a choppy sea, for two months. . . . Yet even that! . . . But I'm filled with confident and glorious hopes. I've been looking at the maps. Do you think *perhaps* the fort on the Asiatic corner will want quelling, and we'll land and come at it from behind, and they'll make a sortie and meet us on the plains of Troy? It seems to me strategically so possible. Shall we have a Hospital Base (and won't you manage

it?) on Lesbos? Will Hero's Tower crumble under the 15″ guns? Will the sea be polyphloisbic and wine-dark and unvintageable? Shall I loot mosaics from St. Sophia, and Turkish Delight, and carpets? Should we be a Turning Point in History? Oh God!

"I've never been quite so happy in my life, I think. Not quite so pervasively happy; like a stream flowing entirely to one end. I suddenly realise that the ambition of my life has been—since I was two—to go on a military expedition against Constantinople. And when I *thought* I was hungry or sleepy or aching to write a poem —*that* was what I really, blindly, wanted. This is nonsense. Good-night. I'm very tired with equipping my platoon."

They sailed from Avonmouth in the *Grantully Castle* on February 28th. "Four days out," he dated his next letter to Miss Asquith. "All day we've been just out of sight of land, thirty or forty miles away—out of sight, but in smell. There was something earthy in the air, and warm —like the consciousness of a presence in the dark —the wind had something Andalusian in it. It wasn't that wall of scent and invisible blossom and essential spring that knocks you flat, quite suddenly, as you've come round some unseen corner in the atmosphere, fifty miles out from a

South Sea Island; but it *was* the good smell of land—and of Spain, too! And Spain I've never seen, and never shall see, may be. All day I sat and strained my eyes to see over the horizon orange-groves and Moorish buildings, and dark-eyed beauties and guitars, and fountains, and a golden darkness. But the curve of the world lay between us. Do you know Jan [Masefield]'s favourite story—told very melodiously with deep-voice reverence—about Columbus? Columbus wrote a diary (which Jan reads) and described the coast of America as he found it—*the* divinest place in the world. 'It was only like the Paradise of the Saints of God'—and then he remembered that there was *one* place equal to it, the place where he was born—and goes on 'or like the gardens of Andalusia in the spring.' "

He wrote to me from 'North of Tunis' on March 7th. "It seems ages ago since we said good-bye to you on our mottled parade-ground. We've had rather a nice voyage; a bit unsteady the first day (when I was sick) and to-day; otherwise very smooth and delicious. There has been a little, not much, to do. I've read most of *Turkey in Europe*. But what with parades and the reading of military books, I've not written anything. Anyway, my mind's always a blank at sea.

"For two days we've been crawling along the African Coast, observing vast tawny mountains, with white villages on this side of them and white peaks beyond. The sea has been a jewel, and sunset and dawn divine blazes of colour. It's all too ridiculously peaceful for one to believe anything but that we're a—rather odd—lot of tourists, seeing the Mediterranean and bent on enjoyment. War seems infinitely remote; and even the reason, foreseeing Gallipoli, yet admits that there are many blue days to come, and the Cyclades. . . . . .

"I can well see that life might be great fun; and I can well see death might be an admirable solution. . . . . .

"In a fortnight, the quarter million Turks."

I think these words on the prospect of living or dying represent his normal state of mind; and that he had nothing which could justly be called a *presentiment* of death. "This is very odd," was the beginning of a letter which he wrote for me in case he died. "But I suppose I must imagine my non-existence, and make a few arrangements." He certainly spoke to some people as though he were sure of not coming back; but no one can read the letters I have printed without seeing what a creature of moods he was; and it was always his way to dramatise the future.

There was a vivid realisation of the possibility —I believe that was all.[1]

He spoke in the letter I have just quoted of a wish he had expressed to his mother (which she has carried out), that any money he left, and any profits from his books, should be divided between three of his brother poets. "If I can set them free to any extent," he told her, "to write the poetry and plays and books they want to, my death will bring more gain than loss." The three were Lascelles Abercrombie, Walter de la Mare, and Wilfrid Gibson.[2]

[1] The preoccupation with the idea of death, shown in his poems from the first, has often been noticed. When I looked through his copy of Aristophanes, I was struck by a heavy triple mark which he had put against two lines of the *Frogs*—almost the only passage he had marked at all:

τεθνηκόσιν γὰρ ἔλεγεν , ὦ μοχθηρὲ σύ,
οἷς οὐδὲ τρὶς λέγοντες ἐξικνούμεθα.

"Aye, but he's speaking to the dead, you knave,
Who cannot hear us though we call them thrice."
(B. B. Rogers' translation.)

This may have suggested the phrase about the 'unanswering dead' in *Ambarvalia,* which occurs again in a fragment, probably written in 1914:—

"We have told you the last lies, unanswering Dead.
Farewell, we have said,
Knowing the Dead fare neither ill nor well."

[2] Mrs. Brooke included in this bequest the amount of the Howland Memorial Prize, the first award of which was unanimously made to her son in 1916, after his death, by the Committee of the Corporation of Yale University. The prize is given "in recognition of some achievement of marked distinction in the field of literature or fine arts or the science of government; and an important factor in the selection is the idealistic element in the recipient's work." Mr. Charles Howland wrote to Mrs. Brooke announcing the

"We had a very amusing evening in Malta," he wrote to his mother on March 12th. "Our boat got in one afternoon almost last of the lot. We were allowed ashore from 5 to midnight. Oc,[1] Denis and I drove around in a funny little carriage, and looked at the views. It's a very lovely place; very like Verona or any Italian town, but rather cleaner and more Southern. There was a lovely Mediterranean sunset and evening, and the sky and sea were filled with colours. The odd and pleasant thing was the way we kept running into people we knew and hadn't expected to meet. First there were people in all the other battalions, who had come on by other boats. Then we found 'Cardy' [Lionel] Montagu, E.S.M.'s brother, staring at the Cathedral. Then Cherry, who used to be in the Anson with us, a nice chap, and he dined with us; and in, at the end of dinner, came Patrick Shaw-Stewart (of this Battalion) with Charles Lister, who was dragged in absolutely at the last mo-

award: "You must have known already by many avenues of the feeling about him in the United States—of the sense of tenderness for his youth, of the attitude of possession of him jointly with Englishmen as one of the Masters of Song in our common tongue; and indeed that he typifies the nobility of sacrifice for a cause that is ours as well as yours."

The lecture, which by the terms of the gift was due from the prizewinner, was delivered at Yale by Walter de la Mare in his stead.

[1] Arthur Asquith.

ment because he is supposed to know Turkish, and is with the Divisional Staff. Before dinner, as I was buying buttons in a little shop, in walked George Peel! And after dinner, at a nice little opera, everyone I knew seemed to appear, in khaki, all very cheerful and gay. Lots of people who we thought were going to be left behind had been able to get out at the last moment, and pounced on us from behind boxes or out of stalls. The Maltese *élite* who were there must have been puzzled at the noise."

From Malta they went on to Lemnos; "the *loveliest* place in the evening sun," he wrote, "softly white, grey, silver-white buildings, some very old, some new, round a great harbour—all very Southern; like an Italian town in silverpoint, livable and serene, with a sea and sky of opal and pearl and faint gold around. It was nearer than any place I've ever seen to what a Greek must have witnessed when he sailed into a Greek coast-city."

Here there was an alarum, but not an excursion, as appears from a letter to Miss Cox, dated "Somewhere (some way from the front) March 19th." "The other day we—some of us—were told that we sailed next day to make a landing. A few thousand of us. Off we stole that night through the phosphorescent Aegean, scribbling

farewell letters, and snatching periods of excited dream-broken sleep. At four we rose, buckled on our panoply, hung ourselves with glasses, compasses, periscopes, revolvers, food, and the rest, and had a stealthy large breakfast. *That* was a mistake. It's ruinous to load up one's belly four or five hours before it expects it—it throws the machinery out of gear for a week. I felt extremely ill the rest of that day.

"We paraded in silence under paling stars along the sides of the ship. The darkness on the sea was full of scattered flashing lights, hinting at our fellow-transports and the rest. Slowly the sky became warm and green, and the sea opal. Everyone's face looked drawn and ghastly. If we landed, my company was to be the first to land. . . . We made out that we were only a mile or two from a dim shore. I was seized with an agony of remorse that I hadn't taught my platoon a thousand things more energetically and competently. The light grew. The shore looked to be crammed with Fate, and was ominously silent. One man thought he saw a camel through his glasses. . . .

"There were some hours of silence.

"About seven, someone said, 'We're going home.' We dismissed the stokers, who said, quietly, 'When's the next battle?', and disem-

panoplied, and had another breakfast. If we were a 'feint,' or if it was too rough to land, or in general, what little part we blindly played, we never knew, and shall not. Still, we did our bit, not ignobly, I trust. We did not see the enemy. We did not fire at them; nor they at us. It seemed improbable they saw us. One of B Company—she was rolling very slightly—was sick on parade. Otherwise, no casualties. A notable battle.

"Later. We're off to Egypt: for repose. For—I imagine—a month at least. What a life! Another campaign over!"

On March 27th they arrived at Port Said, and he went for three days' leave with Arthur Asquith and Patrick Shaw-Stewart to Cairo, where they saw the Sphinx and the Pyramids, rode about on camels, and bought things in the bazaars.

Sir Ian Hamilton came to Port Said to review the Naval Division on April 3rd, and offered him a post on his staff. "I saw Rupert Brooke," he wrote to me, "lying down under a shelter, rather off colour, poor boy. He had got a touch of the sun the previous day. It was nothing, and essentially he was looking in first-class physical condition. He very naturally would like to see this first adventure through with his own men;

after that I think he would like to come to me. It was very natural, and I quite understand it—I should have answered the same in his case had I been offered a staff billet." Rupert never mentioned this offer to his brother-officers. "The first day I was sick," he wrote to his mother, "before I got out of camp—was the day when our new G.O.C.-in-Chief—you'll know who that is—reviewed us. I'd met him once or twice in London. He came to see me after the review and talked for a bit. He offered me a sort of galloper-aide-de-camp job on his staff: but I shan't take it. Anyhow, not now, not till this present job's over; afterwards, if I've had enough of the regimental officer's work, I might like it." "But it's really so jolly," he wrote to me on the same occasion, "being with Oc and Denis and Charles [Lister] and Patrick and Kelly, that it'd have to be very tempting company to persuade me to give it up."

That evening he joined Patrick Shaw-Stewart, who had the same illness, at the Casino Hotel. "Then began nearly a week of comic alternations and vicissitudes in our humiliating complaint," Shaw-Stewart wrote to me. "The companionship in our two little beds was very close, but limited by our mental state, which owing to starvation was—for me—complete vacuity. So we

just lay opposite and grew our little beards, mine red, his golden brown, and made our little jokes at one another—very good ones, I can't help thinking. Altogether, if it hadn't been for the starvation and the uncomfortable beds and the terrible difficulty of making the Italian waiter understand (R. did better with gesticulatory English than I with Italian, which made me furious) it was the best period of the war for me. We were turned out rather quickly. On the Friday morning, April 9th, we were ordered to be aboard that evening if we were well enough, which of course we both said we were. In my case there was no doubt I was: in R.'s I think it was doubtful, and Colonel Quilter rather urged him to stay behind if he still felt queer, but of course it would have been a difficult thing (morally) to do. So we both went on board and stuck to our cabins for a day or two, R. emerging later than me. Just at this time he seemed really pretty well (as well as at Blandford, which I think for him probably wasn't so very well) but a little listless."

Rupert himself wrote to Miss Asquith the day he left the hotel, "Anyhow here I am, well up on that difficult slope that leads from arrowroot, past chicken broth, by rice puddings, to eggs in

milk, and so to eggs, and boiled fish, and finally (they say) chicken and fruit and even real meat. But that is still beyond the next crest. On! on! But while I shall be well, I think, for our first thrust into the fray, I shall be able to give my Turk, at the utmost, a kitten's tap. A diet of arrowroot doesn't build up violence. I am as weak as a pacifist."

About the same time he wrote to Lascelles Abercrombie: "The Sun-God (he, the Song-God) distinguished one of his most dangerous rivals since Marsyas among the *x* thousand tanned and dirty men blown suddenly on these his special coasts a few days or weeks ago. He unslung his bow. . . . I lie in an hotel, cool at length, with wet cloths on my head and less than nothing in my belly. Sunstroke is a bloody affair. It breaks very suddenly the fair harmonies of the body and the soul. I'm lying recovering from it, living faintly on arrowroot and rice-puddings and milk; passing from dream to dream, all faint and tasteless and pure as arrowroot itself. I shall be all right in time for the fighting, I hope and believe.

"*Later* (*at sea*). I know now what a campaign is. I had a suspicion from Antwerp. It is continual crossing from one place to another, and

back, over dreamlike seas: anchoring, or halting, in the oddest places, for no one knows or quite cares how long: drifting on, at last, to some other equally unexpected, equally out of the way, equally odd spot: for all the world like a bottle in some corner of the bay at a seaside resort. Somewhere, sometimes, there is fighting. Not for us. In the end, no doubt, our apparently aimless course will drift us through, or anchor us in, a blaze of war, quite suddenly; and as suddenly swirl us out again. Meanwhile, the laziest loitering lotus-day I idled away as a wanderer in the South Seas was a bustle of decision and purpose compared to a campaign.

"One just hasn't, though, the time and detachment to write, I find. But I've been collecting a few words, detaching lines from the ambient air, collaring one or two of the golden phrases that a certain wind blows from (will the Censor let me say?) Olympus, across these purple seas."

VIII

Of the 'golden phrases,' only the merest fragments remain. He must have made up more in his head than he wrote down, for his last letter

to me implies a good deal more than there is. "The first few days afloat I was still convalescent. So I could lie in my bunk and read and write in a delicious solitude all day. I actually *did* jot down a line or two. Nothing yet complete (except a song, worthless alone, for Denis to put lovely notes around); but a sonnet or two almost done; and the very respectable and shapely skeleton of an ode-threnody. All of which shall travel to you if and when they are done. . . . . I must go and censor my platoon's letters. My long poem is to be about the existence—and non-locality—of England. And it contains the line —'In Avons of the heart her rivers run.' Lovely, isn't it?"

There is only a small black note-book, from which I will put together what I can. There will be found in the appendix the little song called *The Dance,* mentioned in the letter; and a fragment which is almost his only attempt at blank verse—though even here rhyme steals in towards the end. Here are the scraps which seem to belong to the 'ode-threnody' on England:

All things are written in the mind.
There the sure hills have station; and the wind
Blows in that placeless air.
And there the white and golden birds go flying;
And the stars wheel and shine; and woods are fair;

The light upon the snow is there;
and in that nowhere move
The trees and hills [1] and waters that we love.

And she for whom we die, she the undying
Mother of men
England!

* * *

In Avons of the heart her rivers run.

* * *

She is with all we have loved and found and known,
Closed in the little nowhere of the brain.
Only, of all our dreams,
Not the poor heap of dust and stone,
This local earth, set in terrestrial streams,
Not this man, giving all for gold,
Nor that who has found evil good, nor these
Blind millions, bought and sold . . .

* * *

She is not here, or now—
She is here, and now, yet nowhere—
We gave her birth, who bore us—
Our wandering feet have sought, but never found her—
She is built a long way off—
She, though all men be traitors, not betrayed—
Whose soil is love, and her stars justice, she—
Gracious with flowers,
And robed and glorious in the sea.[2]

* * *

[1] The word 'hands' is written here, I think, by mistake for 'hills.' Compare 'the trees and waters and the hills' in his early poem, *The Charm*.

[2] This last set of lines, or rather jottings, is not written as if they were meant to be consecutive.

She was in his eyes, but he could not see her.
And he was England, but he knew her not.

There are fragments of other poems; two about the expedition:

They say Achilles in the darkness stirred,
And Hector, his old enemy,
Moved the great shades that were his limbs. They heard
More than Olympian thunder on the sea.

* * *

Death and Sleep
Bear many a young Sarpedon home.

And this, headed 'Queen Elizabeth':

And Priam and his fifty sons
Wake all amazed, and hear the guns,
And shake for Troy again.

Then there is this:—

'When Nobby tried,' the stokers say,
'To stop a shrapnel with his belly,
He away,
He left a lump of bleeding jelly.'
But *he* went out, did Nobby Clark [1]
Upon the illimitable dark,
Out of the fields where soldiers stray,
Beyond parades, beyond reveille.

[1] All sailors whose name is Clark are nick-named Nobby. No one knows why.

This is for one of the sonnets:

The poor scrap of a song that some man tried
Down in the troop-decks forrard, brought again
The day you sang it first, on a hill-side,
With April in the wind and in the brain.
And the woods were gold; and youth was in our hands.

* * *

Oh lovers parted,
Oh all you lonely over all the world,
You that look out at morning empty-hearted,
Or you, all night turning uncomforted

* * *

Would God, would God, you could be comforted.

* * *

Eyes that weep,
And a long time for love; and, after, sleep.

There are lines of a poem about evening, in which he recurs to the hares in the Grantchester cornfields:

And daylight, like a dust, sinks through the air,
And drifting, golds the ground . . .
A lark,
A voice in heaven, in fading deeps of light,
Drops, at length, home.

* * *

A wind of night, shy as the young hare
That steals even now out of the corn to play,
Stirs the pale river once, and creeps away.

And of an elegy:

The feet that ran with mine have found their goal,
The eyes that met my eyes have looked on night.
The firm limbs are no more; gone back to earth,
Easily mingling . . .
What he is yet,
Not living, lives, hath place in a few minds . . .

He wears
The ungathered blossom of quiet; stiller he
Than a deep well at noon, or lovers met;
Than sleep, or the heart after wrath. He is
The silence following great words of peace.

That is all.

On the 17th of April they landed at Scyros. Arthur Asquith described it to his sister before anything had happened: "This island is more mountainous than Lemnos, and more sparsely inhabited. It is like one great rock-garden of white and pinkish-white marble, with small red poppies and every sort of wildflower; in the gorges ilex, dwarf holly, and occasional groups of olives; and everywhere the smell of thyme (or is it sage? or wild mint?). Our men kill adders and have fun with big tortoises. The water near the shore, where the bottom is white marble, is more beautifully green and blue than I have ever seen it anywhere."

Here then, in the island where Theseus was buried, and whence the young Achilles and the young Pyrrhus were called to Troy, Rupert Brooke died and was buried on Friday, the 23rd of April, the day of Shakespeare and of St. George.

He seemed quite well till Tuesday the 20th, when there was a Divisional Field-day, and he went to bed tired immediately after dinner. On Wednesday he stayed in bed with pains in his back and head; and a swelling on his lip; but no anxiety was felt till the evening, when he had a temperature of 103. Next morning he was much worse; the swelling had increased, and a consultation was held. The diagnosis was acute blood-poisoning, and all hope was given up. It was decided to move him to the French hospital-ship *Duguay-Trouin* which happened to be at Scyros. When he was told this, his one anxiety was lest he should have difficulty in rejoining his battalion. They reassured him, and he seemed to be content. Soon afterwards he became comatose; and there does not seem to have been any moment when he can have realised that he was dying. The rest of the story shall be told in the words of the letter which Denis Browne wrote me on the 25th from the transport.

"In less than half an hour we had carried him

down into a pinnace and taken him straight aboard the *Duguay-Trouin.* They put him in the best cabin, on the sun-deck. Everything was very roomy and comfortable; they had every modern appliance and the surgeons did all that they possibly could.[1] Oc and I left him about 6 when we could do nothing more, and went to the *Franconia,* where we sent a wireless message to the Admiralty.[2] Next morning Oc and I went over to see what we could do, and found him much weaker. There was nothing to be done, as he was quite unconscious and they were busy trying all the devices they could think of to give him ease. Not that he was suffering, for he was barely conscious all Thursday (he just said 'Hallo' when I went to lift him out into the pinnace), and on Friday he was not conscious at all up to the very last, and felt no pain whatever. At 2 the head surgeon told me he was sinking. Oc went off to see about arrangements, and I sat with Rupert. At 4 o'clock he became weaker,

[1] "I do want you to feel," Browne wrote to Mrs. Brooke, "that nothing was left undone that could alleviate his condition or prolong his life. Nothing, however, all the doctors, French and English, assured me, could have helped him to fight his disease, except a strong constitution. And his was so enfeebled by illness as to make the contest an unequal one. They gave us hardly any hope from the first."

[2] The telegrams were received as if from Lemnos, and as there was no reason to suppose otherwise it was assumed, and published, that he had died there.

and at 4.46 he died, with the sun shining all round his cabin, and the cool sea-breeze blowing through the door and the shaded windows. No one could have wished a quieter or a calmer end than in that lovely bay, shielded by the mountains and fragrant with sage and thyme.[1]

"We buried him the same evening in an olive-grove where he had sat with us on Tuesday—one of the loveliest places on this earth, with grey-green olives round him, one weeping above his head; the ground covered with flowering sage, bluish-grey, and smelling more delicious than any flower I know. The path up to it from the sea is narrow and difficult and very stony; it runs by the bed of a dried-up torrent. We had to post men with lamps every twenty yards to guide the bearers. He was carried up from the boat by his A Company petty officers, led by his platoon-sergeant Saunders; and it was with enormous difficulty that they got the coffin up the narrow way. The journey of a mile took two hours. It was not till 11 that I saw them coming (I had gone up to choose the place, and with Freyberg and Charles Lister I turned the sods of his grave; we had some of his platoon to dig). First came one of his men carrying a great white wooden

[1] This sentence is from the letter to Mrs. Brooke.

cross with his name painted on it in black; then the firing-party, commanded by Patrick; and then the coffin, followed by our officers, and General Paris and one or two others of the Brigade. Think of it all under a clouded moon, with the three mountains[1] around and behind us, and those divine scents everywhere. We lined his grave with all the flowers we could find, and Quilter set a wreath of olive on the coffin. The funeral service was very simply said by the Chaplain, and after the Last Post the little lamp-lit procession went once again down the narrow path to the sea.

"Freyberg, Oc, I, Charles and Cleg [Kelly] stayed behind and covered the grave with great pieces of white marble which were lying everywhere about. Of the cross at the head you know; it was the large one that headed the procession. On the back of it our Greek interpreter wrote in pencil:

ἐνθάδε κεῖται
ὁ δοῦλος τοῦ Θεοῦ
ἀνθυπολοχαγὸς τοῦ
Ἀγγλικοῦ ναυτικοῦ
ἀποθανὼν ὑπὲρ τῆς
ἀπελευθερώσεως τῆς
Κων· πόυλεως ἀπὸ
τῶν Τουρκῶν.[1]

[1] Their names are Paphko, Komaro, and Khokilas.

[1] Here lies the servant of God, Sub-Lieutenant in the English Navy, who died for the deliverance of Constantinople from the Turks.

At his feet was a small wooden cross sent by his platoon. We could not see the grave again, as we sailed from Scyros next morning at 6."

The same friend wrote to Mrs. Brooke: "No words of mine can tell you the sorrow of those whom he has left behind him here. No one of us knew him without loving him, whether they knew him for ten years, as I did, or for a couple of months as others. His brother officers and his men mourn him very deeply. But those who knew him chiefly as a poet of the rarest gifts, the brightest genius, know that the loss is not only yours and ours, but the world's. And beyond his genius there was that infinitely lovable soul, that stainless heart whose earthly death can only be the beginning of a true immortality.

"To his friends Rupert stood for something so much purer, greater, and nobler than ordinary men that his loss seems more explicable than theirs. He has gone to where he came from; but if anyone left the world richer by passing through it, it was he."

Next morning the *Grantully Castle* sailed for the Gallipoli Peninsula. Within six weeks, of the officers named in Denis Browne's letter, he and Colonel Quilter were dead, and all but one of the others had been wounded. Kelly, Lister, and Shaw-Stewart have since been killed.

Winston Churchill wrote in the *Times* of April 26th: "Rupert Brooke is dead. A telegram from the Admiral at Lemnos tells us that this life has closed at the moment when it seemed to have reached its springtime. A voice had become audible, a note had been struck, more true, more thrilling, more able to do justice to the nobility of our youth in arms engaged in this present war, than any other—more able to express their thoughts of self-surrender, and with a power to carry comfort to those who watched them so intently from afar. The voice has been swiftly stilled. Only the echoes and the memory remain; but they will linger.

"During the last few months of his life, months of preparation in gallant comradeship and open air, the poet-soldier told with all the simple force of genius the sorrow of youth about to die, and the sure triumphant consolations of a sincere and valiant spirit. He expected to die; he was willing to die for the dear England whose beauty and majesty he knew; and he advanced towards the brink in perfect serenity, with absolute conviction of the rightness of his country's cause, and a heart devoid of hate for fellow-men.

"The thoughts to which he gave expression in the very few incomparable war sonnets which he has left behind will be shared by many thou-

sands of young men moving resolutely and blithely forward into this, the hardest, the cruellest, and the least-rewarded of all the wars that men have fought. They are a whole history and revelation of Rupert Brooke himself. Joyous, fearless, versatile, deeply instructed, with classic symmetry of mind and body, he was all that one would wish England's noblest sons to be in days when no sacrifice but the most precious is acceptable, and the most precious is that which is most freely proffered."

. . . . . .

"Coming from Alexandria yesterday," Denis Browne wrote to me on June 2nd, two days before his own death, "we passed Rupert's island at sunset. The sea and sky in the East were grey and misty; but it stood out in the West, black and immense, with a crimson glowing halo round it. Every colour had come into the sea and sky to do him honour; and it seemed that the island must ever be shining with his glory that we buried there."

APPENDIX

Note

The Appendix contains: (1) the only two coherent fragments found in the notebook which he used in the last month of his life (see Memoir, page 175); a little song, written, I think, on his travels; and a poem, dating probably from 1912, which for some reason he left unrevised, but which I print for the sake of the characteristic image in the first stanza: (2) a few 'lighter' poems which I dare say he would have printed on their merits if he had published a volume in which they would not have been out of key. Two of these, the "Letter to a Live Poet" and "The Little Dog's Day," were written for *Westminster Gazette* competitions, in which they won prizes.

E. M.

FRAGMENT

I strayed about the deck, an hour, to-night
Under a cloudy moonless sky; and peeped
In at the windows, watched my friends at table,
Or playing cards, or standing in the doorway,
Or coming out into the darkness. Still
No one could see me.

I would have thought of them
—Heedless, within a week of battle—in pity,
Pride in their strength and in the weight and firmness
And link'd beauty of bodies, and pity that
This gay machine of splendour 'ld soon be broken,
Thought little of, pashed, scattered. . . .

Only, always,
I could but see them—against the lamplight—pass
Like coloured shadows, thinner than filmy glass,
Slight bubbles, fainter than the wave's faint light,
That broke to phosphorus out in the night,
Perishing things and strange ghosts—soon to die
To other ghosts—this one, or that, or I.

April, 1915.

THE DANCE

A Song

As the Wind, and as the Wind,
In a corner of the way,
Goes stepping, stands twirling,
Invisibly, comes whirling,
Bows before, and skips behind,
In a grave, an endless play—

So my Heart, and so my Heart,
Following where your feet have gone,
Stirs dust of old dreams there;
He turns a toe; he gleams there,
Treading you a dance apart.
But you see not. You pass on.

April, 1915.

SONG

The way of love was thus.
He was born one winter morn
With hands delicious,
And it was well with us.

Love came our quiet way,
Lit pride in us, and died in us,
All in a winter's day.
There is no more to say.

1913 (?).

SOMETIMES EVEN NOW . . .

Sometimes even now I may
Steal a prisoner's holiday,
Slip, when all is worst, the bands,
  Hurry back, and duck beneath
Time's old tyrannous groping hands,
  Speed away with laughing breath
Back to all I'll never know,
Back to you, a year ago.

Truant there from Time and Pain,
What I had, I find again:
Sunlight in the boughs above,
  Sunlight in your hair and dress,
The Hands too proud for all but Love,
  The Lips of utter kindliness,
The Heart of bravery swift and clean
  Where the best was safe, I knew,
And laughter in the gold and green,
  And song, and friends, and ever you
With smiling and familiar eyes,
  You—but friendly: you—but true.

And Innocence accounted wise,
  And Faith the fool, the pitiable.
Love so rare, one would swear
  All of earth for ever well—
Careless lips and flying hair,
  And little things I may not tell.

It does but double the heart-ache
When I wake, when I wake.

1912 (?).

SONNET: IN TIME OF REVOLT

The Thing must End. I am no boy! I AM
  No BOY! ! being twenty-one. Uncle, you make
  A great mistake, a very great mistake,
In chiding me for letting slip a 'Damn!'
What's more, you called me 'Mother's one ewe lamb,'
  Bade me 'refrain from swearing—for *her* sake—
  Till I'm grown up' . . . —By God! I think you take
Too much upon you, Uncle William!

You say I am your brother's only son.
I know it. And, 'What of it?' I reply.
My heart's resolvéd. *Something must be done.*
So shall I curb, so baffle, so suppress
This too avuncular officiousness,
Intolerable consanguinity.

January, 1908.

A LETTER TO A LIVE POET

Sir, since the last Elizabethan died,
Or, rather, that more Paradisal muse,
Blind with much light, passed to the light more glorious
Or deeper blindness, no man's hand, as thine,
Has, on the world's most noblest chord of song,
Struck certain magic strains. Ears satiate
With the clamorous, timorous whisperings of to-day,

Thrilled to perceive once more the spacious voice
And serene utterance of old. We heard
—With rapturous breath half-held, as a dreamer dreams
Who dares not know it dreaming, lest he wake—
The odorous, amorous style of poetry,
The melancholy knocking of those lines,
The long, low soughing of pentameters,
—Or the sharp of rhyme as a bird's cry—
And the innumerable truant polysyllables
Multitudinously twittering like a bee.
Fulfilled our hearts were with that music then,
And all the evenings sighed it to the dawn,
And all the lovers heard it from all the trees.
All of the accents upon all the norms!
—And ah! the stress on the penultimate!
We never knew blank verse could have such feet.

Where is it now? Oh, more than ever, now,
I sometimes think no poetry is read
Save where some sepultured Caesura bled,
Royally incarnadining all the line.
Is the imperial iamb laid to rest,
And the young trochee, having done enough?

Ah! turn again! Sing so to us, who are sick
Of seeming-simple rhymes, bizarre emotions,
Decked in the simple verses of the day,
Infinite meaning in a little gloom,
Irregular thoughts in stanzas regular,
Modern despair in antique metres, myths
Incomprehensible at evening,
And symbols that mean nothing in the dawn.

The slow lines swell. The new style sighs. The Celt
Moans round with many voices.
God! to see
Gaunt anapaests stand up out of the verse,
Combative accents, stress where no stress should be,
Spondee on spondee, iamb on choriamb,
The thrill of all the tribrachs in the world,
And all the vowels rising to the E!
To hear the blessed mutter of those verbs,
Conjunctions passionate toward each other's arms,
And epithets like amaranthine lovers
Stretching luxuriously to the stars,
All prouder pronouns than the dawn, and all
The thunder of the trumpets of the noun!

January, 1911.

FRAGMENT ON PAINTERS

There is an evil which that Race attaints
Who represent God's World with oily paints,
Who mock the Universe, so rare and sweet,
With spots of colour on a canvas sheet,
Defile the Lovely and insult the Good
By scrawling upon little bits of wood.
They'd snare the moon, and catch the immortal sun
With madder brown and pale vermilion,
Entrap an English evening's magic hush . . .

. . . . . .

THE TRUE BEATITUDE

They say, when the Great Prompter's hand shall ring
  Down the last curtain upon earth and sea,
  All the Good Mimes will have eternity
To praise their Author, worship love and sing;
Or to the walls of Heaven wandering
  Look down on those damned for a fretful d——,
  Mock them (all theologians agree
On this reward for virtue), laugh, and fling

New sulphur on the sin-incarnadined . . .
  Ah, Love! still temporal, and still atmospheric,
    Teleologically unperturbed,
We share a peace by no divine divined,
  An earthly garden hidden from any cleric,
    Untrodden of God, by no Eternal curbed.

1913.

SONNET REVERSED

Hand trembling towards hand; the amazing lights
Of heart and eye. They stood on supreme heights.

Ah, the delirious weeks of honeymoon!
  Soon they returned, and, after strange adventures,
Settled at Balham by the end of June.
  Their money was in Can. Pacs. B. Debentures,

And in Antofagastas. Still he went
  Cityward daily; still she did abide
At home. And both were really quite content
  With work and social pleasures. Then they died.
They left three children (besides George, who drank):
  The eldest Jane, who married Mr. Bell,
William, the head-clerk in the County Bank,
  And Henry, a stock-broker, doing well.

LULWORTH, 1, *January*, 1911.

THE LITTLE DOG'S DAY

All in the town were still asleep,
When the sun came up with a shout and leap.
In the lonely streets unseen by man,
A little dog danced. And the day began.

All his life he'd been good, as far as he could,
And the poor little beast had done all that he should.
But this morning he swore, by Odin and Thor
And the Canine Valhalla—he'd stand it no more!

So his prayer he got granted—to do just what he wanted,
Prevented by none, for the space of one day.
'*Jam incipiebo,*[1] *sedere facebo,*'[2]
In dog-Latin he quoth, '*Euge! sophos! hurray!*'

[1] Now we're off.
[2] *I'll* make them sit up.

He fought with the he-dogs, and winked at the she-dogs,
A thing that had never been *heard* of before.
'For the stigma of gluttony, I care not a button!' he
Cried, and ate all he could swallow—and more.

He took sinewy lumps from the shins of old frumps,
And mangled the errand-boys—when he could get 'em.
He shammed furious *rabies*,[1] and bit all the babies,[1]
And followed the cats up the trees, and then ate 'em!

They thought 'twas the devil was holding a revel,
And sent for the parson to drive him away;
For the town never knew such a hullabaloo
As that little dog raised—till the end of that day.

When the blood-red sun had gone burning down,
And the lights were lit in the little town,
Outside, in the gloom of the twilight grey,
The little dog died when he'd had his day.

July, 1907.

[1] Pronounce either to suit rhyme.

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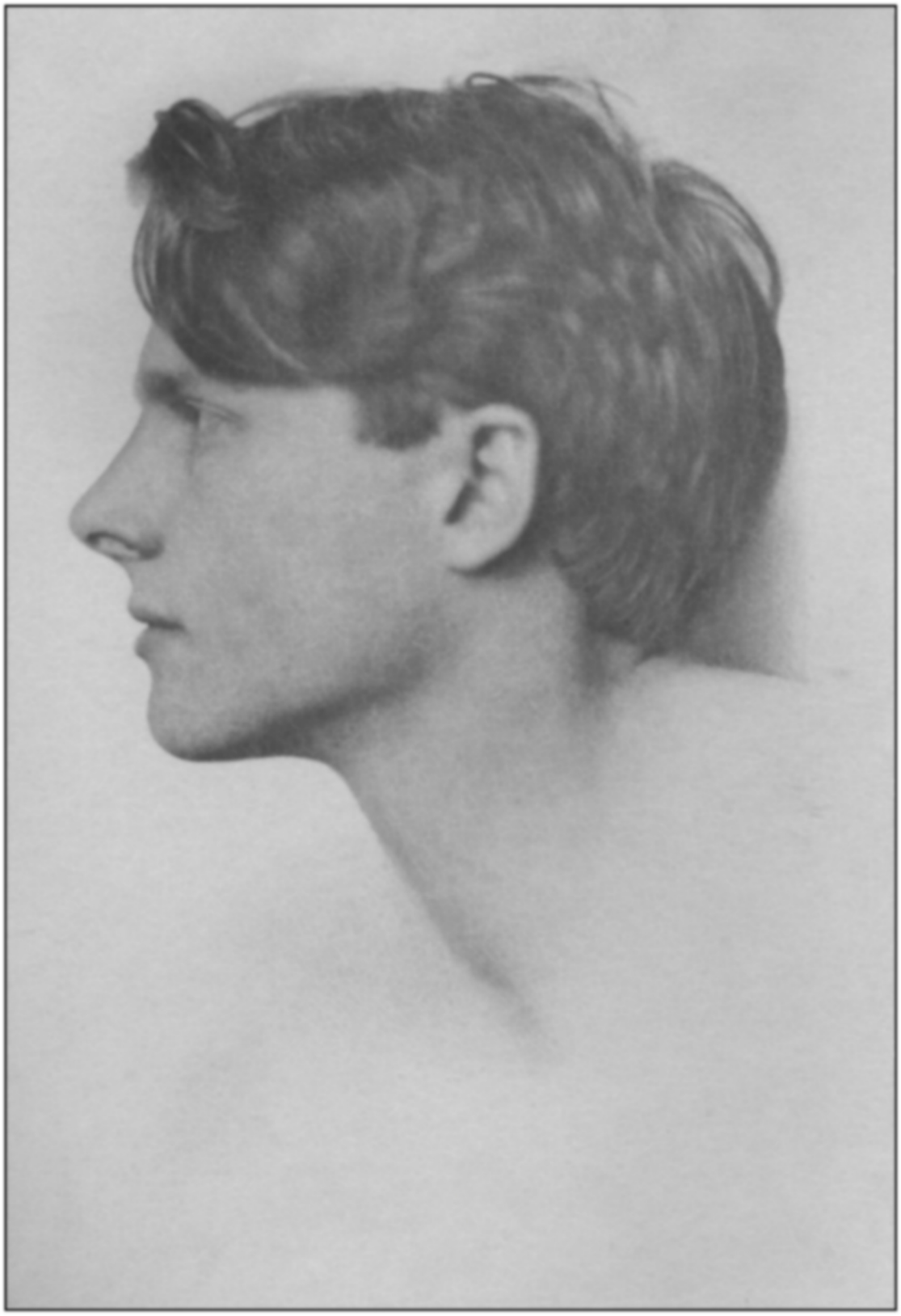

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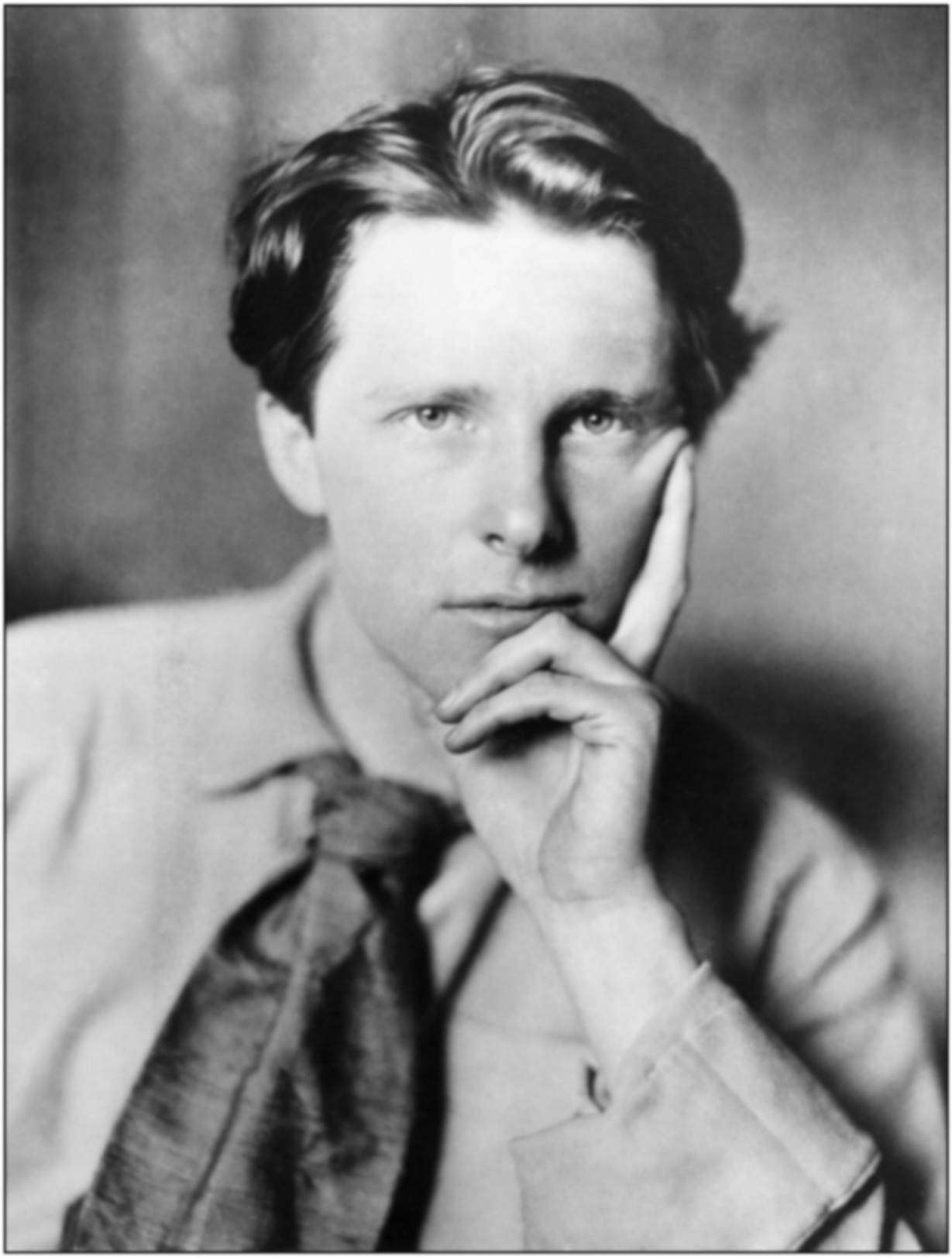

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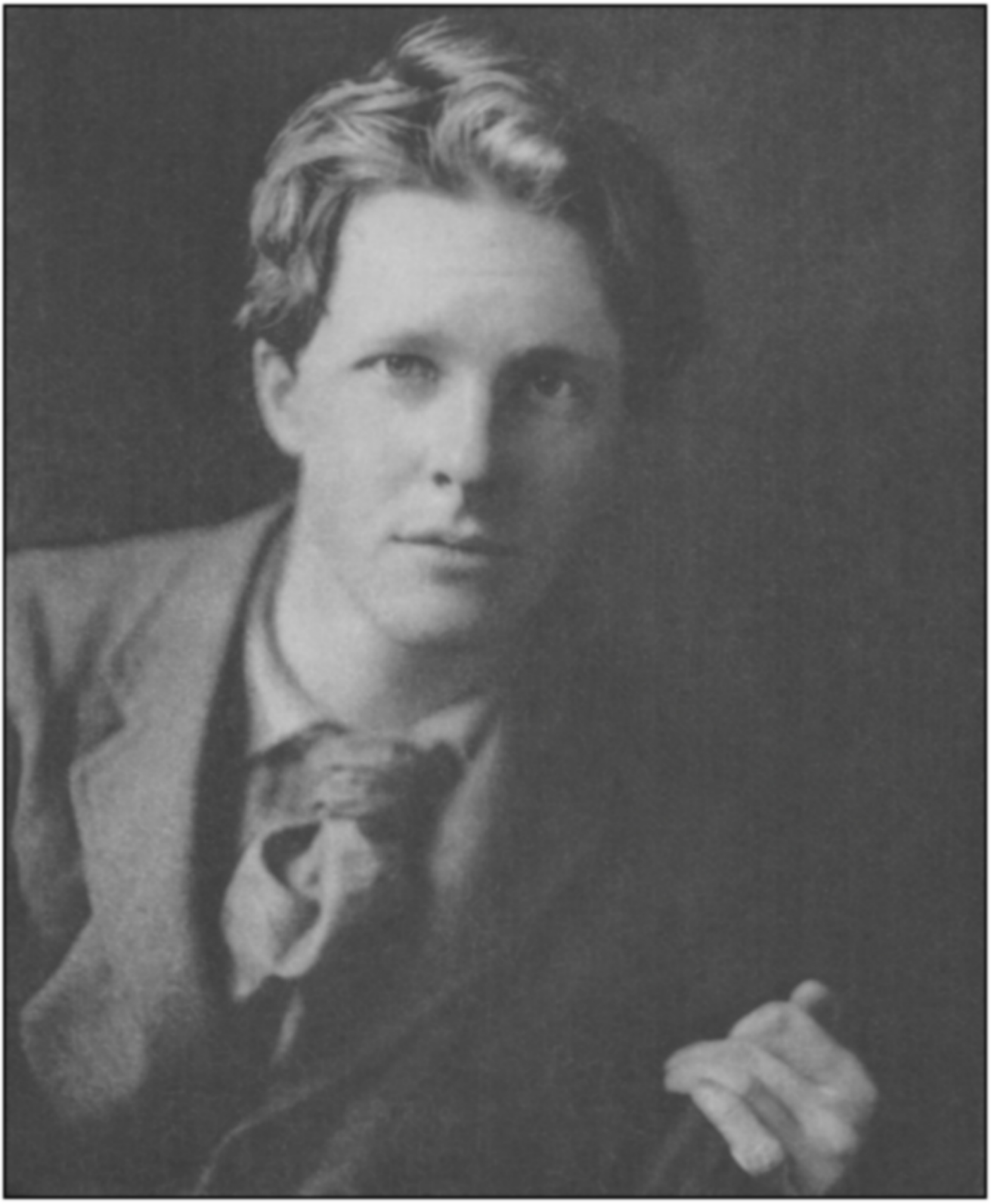

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1914 Photograph of Rupert Brooke at Blandford Camp

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Rupert Brooke (middle row second left) in February 1915 with fellow soldiers from the Hood Battalion at Blandford Camp in southern England

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Original grave of Rupert Brooke on the Greek island of Skyros

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DIGITALLY RESTORED VERSION FROM
AN ORIGINAL 1916 EDITION

Letters from America

Letters from America by Rupert Brooke.

With a Preface by Henry James

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Published January, 1916

Note

THE author started in May 1913 on a journey to the United States, Canada, and the South Seas, from which he returned next year at the beginning of June. The first thirteen chapters of this book were written as letters to the *Westminster Gazette*. He would probably not have republished them in their present form, as he intended to write a longer book on his travels; but they are now printed with only the correction of a few evident slips.

The two remaining chapters appeared in the *New Statesman*, soon after the outbreak of war.

Thanks are due to the Editors who have allowed the republication of the articles.

E. M.

Letters from America

RUPERT BROOKE

NOTHING more generally or more recurrently solicits us, in the light of literature, I think, than the interest of our learning how the poet, the true poet, and above all the particular one with whom we may for the moment be concerned, has come into his estate, asserted and preserved his identity, worked out his question of sticking to that and to nothing else; and has so been able to reach us and touch us *as* a poet, in spite of the accidents and dangers that must have beset this course. The chances and changes, the personal history of any absolute genius, draw us to watch his adventure with curiosity and inquiry, lead us on to win more of his secret and borrow more of his experience (I mean, needless to say, when we are at all critically minded); but there is something in the clear safe arrival of the poetic nature, in a given case, at the point of its free and happy exercise, that provokes, if not the cold impulse to challenge or cross-question it, at least the need of understanding so far as possible how, in a world in which difficulty and disaster are frequent, the most wavering and flickering of all fine flames has escaped extinction. We go back, we help ourselves to hang about the attestation of the first spark of the flame, and like to indulge in a fond notation of such facts as that of the air in

which it was kindled and insisted on proceeding, or yet perhaps failed to proceed, to a larger combustion, and the draughts, blowing about the world, that were either, as may have happened, to quicken its native force or perhaps to extinguish it in a gust of undue violence. It is naturally when the poet has emerged unmistakably clear, or has at a happy moment of his story seemed likely to, that our attention and our suspense in the matter are most intimately engaged; and we are at any rate in general beset by the impression and haunted by the observed law, that the growth and the triumph of the faculty at its finest have been positively in proportion to certain rigours of circumstance.

It is doubtless not indeed so much that this appearance has been inveterate as that the quality of genius in fact associated with it is apt to strike us as the clearest we know. We think of Dante in harassed exile, of Shakespeare under sordidly professional stress, of Milton in exasperated exposure and material darkness; we think of Burns and Chatterton, and Keats and Shelley and Coleridge, we think of Leopardi and Musset and Emily Brontë and Walt Whitman, as it is open to us surely to think even of Wordsworth, so harshly conditioned by his spareness and bareness and bleakness—all this in reference to the voices that have most proved their command of the ear of time, and with the various examples added of those claiming, or at best enjoying, but the slighter attention; and their office thus mainly affects us as that of showing in how jostled, how frequently arrested and all but

defeated a hand, the torch could still be carried. It is not of course for the countrymen of Byron and of Tennyson and Swinburne, any more than for those of Victor Hugo, to say nothing of those of Edmond Rostand, to forget the occurrence on occasion of high instances in which the dangers all seemed denied and only favour and facility recorded; but it would take more of these than we can begin to set in a row to purge us of that prime determinant, after all, of our affection for the great poetic muse, the vision of the rarest sensibility and the largest generosity we know kept by her at their pitch, kept fighting for their life and insisting on their range of expression, amid doubts and derisions and buffets, even sometimes amid stones of stumbling quite self-invited, that might at any moment have made the loss of the precious clue really irremediable. Which moral, so pointed, accounts assuredly for half our interest in the poetic character—a sentiment more unlikely than not, I think, to survive a sustained succession of Victor Hugos and Rostands, or of Byrons, Tennysons and Swinburnes. We quite consciously miss in these bards, as we find ourselves rather wondering even at our failure to miss it in Shelley, that such "complications" as they may have had to reckon with were not in general of the cruelly troublous order, and that no stretch of the view either of our own "theory of art" or of our vivacity of passion as making trouble, contributes perceptibly the required savour of the pathetic. We cling, critically or at least experientially speaking, to our superstition, if not absolutely

to our approved measure, of this grace and proof; and that truly, to cut my argument short, is what sets us straight down before a sudden case in which the old discrimination quite drops to the ground—in which we neither on the one hand miss anything that the general association could have given it, nor on the other recognise the pomp that attends the grand exceptions I have mentioned.

Rupert Brooke, young, happy, radiant, extraordinarily endowed and irresistibly attaching, virtually met a soldier's death, met it in the stress of action and the all but immediate presence of the enemy; but he is before us as a new, a confounding and superseding example altogether, an unprecedented image, formed to resist erosion by time or vulgarisation by reference, of quickened possibilities, finer ones than ever before, in the stuff poets may be noted as made of. With twenty reasons fixing the interest and the charm that will henceforth abide in his name and constitute, as we may say, his legend, he submits all helplessly to one in particular which is, for appreciation, the least personal to him or inseparable from him, and he does this because, while he is still in the highest degree of the distinguished faculty and quality, we happen to feel him even more markedly and significantly "modern." This is why I speak of the mixture of his elements as new, feeling that it governs his example, put by it in a light which nothing else could have equally contributed—so that Byron for instance, who startled his contemporaries by taking for granted scarce one of the articles that formed

their comfortable faith and by revelling in almost everything that made them idiots if he himself was to figure as a child of truth, looks to us, by any such measure, comparatively plated over with the impenetrable rococo of his own day. I speak, I hasten to add, not of Byron's volume, his flood and his fortune, but of his really having quarrelled with the temper and the accent of his age still more where they might have helped him to expression than where he but flew in their face. He hugged his pomp, whereas our unspeakably fortunate young poet of to-day, linked like him also, for consecration of the final romance, with the isles of Greece, took for *his* own the whole of the poetic consciousness he was born to, and moved about in it as a stripped young swimmer might have kept splashing through blue water and coming up at any point that friendliness and fancy, with every prejudice shed, might determine. Rupert expressed us *all*, at the highest tide of our actuality, and was the creature of a freedom restricted only by that condition of his blinding youth, which we accept on the whole with gratitude and relief—given that I qualify the condition as dazzling even to himself. How can it therefore not be interesting to see a little what the wondrous modern in him consisted of?

I

What it first and foremost really comes to, I think, is the fact that at an hour when the civilised peoples are on exhibition, quite finally and sharply on show,

to each other and to the world, as they absolutely never in all their long history have been before, the English tradition (both of amenity and of energy, I naturally mean), should have flowered at once into a specimen so beautifully producible. Thousands of other sentiments are of course all the while, in different connections, at hand for us; but it is of the exquisite civility, the social instincts of the race, *poetically* expressed, that I speak; and it would be hard to overstate the felicity of his fellow-countrymen's being able just now to say: "Yes, this, with the imperfection of so many of our arrangements, with the persistence of so many of our mistakes, with the waste of so much of our effort and the weight of the many-coloured mantle of time that drags so redundantly about us, this natural accommodation of the English spirit, this frequent extraordinary beauty of the English aspect, this finest saturation of the English intelligence by its most immediate associations, tasting as they mainly do of the long past, this ideal image of English youth, in a word, at once radiant and reflective, are things that appeal to us as delightfully exhibitional beyond a doubt, yet as drawn, to the last fibre, from the very wealth of our own conscience and the very force of our own history. We haven't, for such an instance of our genius, to reach out to strange places or across other, and otherwise productive, tracts; the exemplary instance himself has well-nigh as a matter of course reached and revelled, for that is exactly our way in proportion as we feel ourselves clear. But the kind of experience so

entailed, of contribution so gathered, is just what we wear easiest when we have been least stinted of it, and what our English use of makes perhaps our vividest reference to our thick-growing native determinants."

Rupert Brooke, at any rate, the charmed commentator may well keep before him, simply did all the usual English things—under the happy provision of course that he found them in his way at their best; and it was exactly most delightful in him that no inordinate expenditure, no anxious extension of the common plan, as "liberally" applied all about him, had been incurred or contrived to predetermine his distinction. It is difficult to express on the contrary how peculiar a value attached to his having simply "come in" for the general luck awaiting any English youth who may not be markedly inapt for the traditional chances. He could in fact easily strike those who most appreciated him as giving such an account of the usual English things—to repeat the form of my allusion to them—as seemed to address you to them, in their very considerable number indeed, for any information about him that might matter, but which left you wholly to judge whether they seemed justified by their fruits. This manner about them, as one may call it in general, often contributes to your impression that they make for a certain strain of related modesty which may on occasion be one of their happiest effects; it at any rate, in days when my acquaintance with them was slighter, used to leave me gaping at the treasure of operation, the far recessional perspectives, it

took for granted and any offered demonstration of the extent or the mysteries of which seemed unthinkable just in proportion as the human resultant testified in some one or other of his odd ways to their influence. He might not always be, at any rate on first acquaintance, a resultant explosively human, but there was in any case one reflection he could always cause you to make: "What a wondrous system it indeed must be which insists on flourishing to all appearance under such an absence of advertised or even of confessed relation to it as would do honour to a vacuum produced by an air-pump!" The formulation, the approximate expression of what the system at large might or mightn't do for those in contact with it, became thus one's own fitful care, with one's attention for a considerable period doubtless dormant enough, but with the questions always liable to revive before the individual case.

Rupert Brooke made them revive as soon as one began to know him, or in other words made one want to read back into him each of his promoting causes without exception, to trace to some source in the ambient air almost any one, at a venture, of his aspects; so precious a loose and careless bundle of happy references did that inveterate trick of giving the go-by to over-emphasis which he shared with his general kind fail to prevent your feeling sure of his having about him. I think the liveliest interest of these was that while not one of them was signally romantic, by the common measure of the great English amenity, they yet hung together, rein-

forcing and enhancing each other, in a way that seemed to join their hands for an incomparably educative or civilising process, the great mark of which was that it took some want of amenability in particular subjects to betray anything like a gap. I do not mean of course to say that gaps, and occasionally of the most flagrant, were made so supremely difficult of occurrence; but only that the effect, in the human resultants who kept these, and with the least effort, most in abeyance, was a thing one wouldn't have had different by a single shade. I am not sure that such a case of the recognisable was the better established by the fact of Rupert's being one of the three sons of a house-master at Rugby, where he was born in 1887 and where he lost his father in 1910, the elder of his brothers having then already died and the younger being destined to fall in battle at the allied Front, shortly after he himself had succumbed; but the circumstance I speak of gives a peculiar and an especially welcome consecration to that perceptible play in him of the inbred "public school" character the bloom of which his short life had too little time to remove and which one wouldn't for the world not have been disposed to note, with everything else, in the beautiful complexity of his attributes. The fact was that if one liked him—and I may as well say at once that few young men, in our time, can have gone through life under a greater burden, more easily carried and kept in its place, of being liked—one liked absolutely everything about him, without the smallest exception; so that he appeared

to convert before one's eyes all that happened to him, or that had or that ever might, not only to his advantage as a source of life and experience, but to the enjoyment on its own side of a sort of illustrational virtue or glory. This appearance of universal assimilation—often indeed by incalculable ironic reactions which were of the very essence of the restless young intelligence rejoicing in its gaiety—made each part of his rich consciousness, so rapidly acquired, cling, as it were, to the company of all the other parts, so as at once neither to miss any touch of the luck (one keeps coming back to that), incurred by them, or to let them suffer any want of its own rightness. It was as right, through the spell he cast altogether, that he should have come into the world and have passed his boyhood in that Rugby home, as that he should have been able later on to wander as irrepressibly as the spirit moved him, or as that he should have found himself fitting as intimately as he was very soon to do into any number of the incalculabilities, the intellectual at least, of the poetic temperament. He had them all, he gave himself in his short career up to them all—and I confess that, partly for reasons to be further developed, I am unable even to guess what they might eventually have made of him; which is of course what brings us round again to that view of him as the young poet with absolutely nothing but his generic spontaneity to trouble about, the young poet profiting for happiness by a general condition unprecedented for young poets, that I began by indulging in.

He went from Rugby to Cambridge, where, after a while, he carried off a Fellowship at King's, and where, during a short visit there in "May week," or otherwise early in June 1909, I first, and as I was to find, very unforgettingly, met him. He reappears to me as with his felicities all most promptly divinable, in that splendid setting of the river at the "backs"; as to which indeed I remember vaguely wondering what it was left to such a place to do with the added, the verily wasted, grace of such a person, or how even such a person could hold his own, as who should say, at such a pitch of simple scenic perfection. Any difficulty dropped, however, to the reconciling vision; for that the young man was publicly and responsibly a poet seemed the fact a little over-officiously involved—to the promotion of a certain surprise (on one's own part) at his having to "be" anything. It was to come over me still more afterwards that nothing of that or of any other sort need really have rested on him with a weight of obligation, and in fact I cannot but think that life might have been seen and felt to suggest to him, in an exposed unanimous conspiracy, that his status should be left to the general sense of others, ever so many others, who would sufficiently take care of it, and that such a fine rare case was accordingly as arguable as it possibly *could* be—with the pure, undischarged poetry of him and the latent presumption of his dying for his country the only things to gainsay it. The question was to a certain extent crude, "Why *need* he be a poet, why need he so specialise?" but if this was so it was only, it was already, symp-

tomatic of the interesting final truth that he was to testify to his function in the unparalleled way. He was going to have the life (the unanimous conspiracy so far achieved *that*), was going to have it under no more formal guarantee than that of his appetite and genius for it; and this was to help us all to the complete appreciation of him. No single scrap of the English fortune at its easiest and truest —which means of course with every vulgarity dropped out—but was to brush him as by the readiest instinctive wing, never over-straining a point or achieving a miracle to do so; only trusting his exquisite imagination and temper to respond to the succession of his opportunities. It is in the light of what this succession could in the most natural and most familiar way in the world amount to for him that we find this idea of a beautiful crowning modernness above all to meet his case. The promptitude, the perception, the understanding, the quality of humour and sociability, the happy lapses in the logic of inward reactions (save for their all infallibly being poetic), of which he availed himself consented to be as illustrational as any fondest friend could wish, whether the subject of the exhibition was aware of the degree or not, and made his vivacity of vision, his exercise of fancy and irony, of observation at its freest, inevitable—while at the same time setting in motion no machinery of experience in which his curiosity, or in other words, the quickness of his familiarity, didn't move faster than anything else.

II

I owe to his intimate and devoted friend Mr Edward Marsh the communication of many of his letters, these already gathered into an admirable brief memoir which is yet to appear and which will give ample help in the illustrative way to the pages to which the present remarks form a preface, and which are collected from the columns of the London evening journal in which they originally saw the light. The "literary baggage" of his short course consists thus of his two slender volumes of verse and of these two scarcely stouter sheafs of correspondence[1]—though I should add that the hitherto unpublished letters enjoy the advantage of a commemorative and interpretative commentary, at the Editor's hands, which will have rendered the highest service to each matter. That even these four scant volumes tell the whole story, or fix the whole image, of the fine young spirit they are concerned with we certainly hold back from allowing; his case being in an extraordinary degree that of a creature on whom the gods had smiled their brightest and half of whose manifestation therefore was by the simple act of presence and of direct communication. He did in fact specialise, to repeat my term; only since, as one reads him, whether in verse or in prose, that distinguished readability seems all the specialisation one need invoke, so when the question was of the gift that made of his face to face address a circumstance so complete in itself as apparently to cover all the ground, leaving no margin either, an activity

[1] There remain also to be published a book on John Webster and a prose play in one act.—E. M.

to the last degree justified appeared the only name for one's impression. The moral of all which is doubtless that these brief, if at the same time very numerous, moments of his quick career formed altogether as happy a time, in as happy a place, to be born to as the student of the human drama has ever caught sight of—granting always, that is, that some actor of the scene has been thoroughly up to his part. Such was the sort of recognition, assuredly, under which Rupert played *his*—that of his lending himself to every current and contact, the "newer," the later fruit of time, the better; only this not because any particular one was an agitating revelation, but because with due sensibility, with a restless inward ferment, at the centre of them all, what could he possibly so much feel like as the heir of all the ages? I remember his originally giving me, though with no shade of imputable intention, the sense of his just *being* that, with the highest amiability—the note in him that, as I have hinted, one kept coming back to; so that during a long wait for another glimpse of him I thought of the practice and function so displayed as wholly engaging, took for granted his keeping them up with equal facility and pleasure. Nothing could have been more delightful accordingly, later on, in renewal of the personal acquaintance than to gather that this was exactly what had been taking place, and with an inveteracy as to which his letters are a full documentation. Whatever his own terms for the process might be had he been brought to book, and though the variety of his terms for anything and everything

was the very play, and even the measure, of his talent, the most charmed and conclusive description of him was that no young man had ever so naturally taken on under the pressure of life the poetic nature, and shaken it so free of every encumbrance by simply wearing it as he wore his complexion or his outline.

That, then, was the way the imagination followed him with its luxury of confidence: he was doing everything that could be done in the time (since this was the modernest note), but performing each and every finest shade of these blest acts with a poetic punctuality that was only matched by a corresponding social sincerity. I recall perfectly my being sure of it all the while, even if with little current confirmation beyond that supplied by his first volume of verse; and the effect of the whole record is now to show that such a conclusion was quite extravagantly right. He *was* constantly doing all the things, and this with a reckless freedom, as it might be called, that really dissociated the responsibility of the precious character from anything like conscious domestic coddlement to a point at which no troubled young singer, none, that is, equally troubled, had perhaps ever felt he could afford to dissociate it. Rupert's resources for affording, in the whole connection, were his humour, his irony, his need, under every quiver of inspiration, toward whatever end, to be amused and amusing, and to find above all that this could never so much occur as by the application of his talent, of which he was perfectly conscious, to his own case. He carried his case with him, for purposes of derision as much

as for any others, wherever he went, and how he went everywhere, thus blissfully burdened, is what meets us at every turn on his printed page. My only doubt about him springs in fact from the question of whether he knew that the earthly felicity enjoyed by him, his possession of the exquisite temperament linked so easily to the irrepressible experience, was a thing to make of the young Briton of the then hour so nearly the spoiled child of history that one wanted something in the way of an extra guarantee to feel soundly sure of him. I come back once more to his having apparently never dreamt of any stretch of the point of liberal allowance, of so-called adventure, on behalf of "development," never dreamt of any stretch but that of the imagination itself indeed—quite a different matter and even if it too were at moments to recoil; it was so true that the general measure of his world as to what it might be prompt and pleasant and in the day's work or the day's play to "go in for" was exactly the range that tinged all his education as liberal, the education the free design of which he had left so short a way behind him when he died.

Just there was the luck attendant of the coincidence of his course with the moment at which the proceeding hither and yon to the tune of almost any "happy thought," and in the interest of almost any branch of culture or invocation of response that might be more easily improvised than not, could positively strike the observer as excessive, as in fact absurd, for the formation of taste or the enrichment of genius, unless the principle of these values

had in a particular connection been subjected in advance to some challenge or some test. Why should it take such a flood of suggestion, such a luxury of acquaintance and contact, only to make superficial specimens? Why shouldn't the art of living inward a little more, and thereby of digging a little deeper or pressing a little further, rather modestly replace the enviable, always the enviable, young Briton's enormous range of alternatives in the way of question-begging movement, the way of vision and of non-vision, the enormous habit of holidays? If one could have made out once for all that holidays were proportionately and infallibly inspiring one would have ceased thoughtfully to worry; but the question was as it stood an old story, even though it might freshly radiate, on occasion, under the recognition that the seed-smothered patch of soil flowered, when it did flower, with a fragrance all its own. This concomitant, however, always dangled, that if it were put to us, "Do you really mean you would rather they should *not* perpetually have been again for a look-in at Berlin, or an awfully good time at Munich, or a rush round Sicily, or a dash through the States to Japan, with whatever like rattling renewals?" you would after all shrink from the responsibility of such a restriction before being clear as to what you would suggest in its place. Rupert went on reading-parties from King's to Lulworth for instance, which the association of the two places, the two so extraordinarily finished scenes, causes to figure as a sort of preliminary flourish; and everything

that came his way after that affects me as the blest indulgence in flourish upon flourish. This was not in the least the air, or the desire, or the pretension of it, but the unfailing felicity just kept catching him up, just left him never wanting nor waiting for some pretext to roam, or indeed only the more responsively to stay, doing either, whichever it might be, as a form of highly intellectualised "fun." He didn't overflow with shillings, yet so far as roving was concerned the practice was always easy, and perhaps the adorably whimsical lyric, contained in his second volume of verse, on the pull of Grantchester at his heartstrings, as the old vicarage of that sweet adjunct to Cambridge could present itself to him in a Berlin café, may best exemplify the sort of thing that was represented, in one way and another, by his taking his most ultimately English ease.

Whatever Berlin or Munich, to speak of them only, could do or fail to do for him, how can one not rejoice without reserve in the way he felt what he did feel as poetic reaction of the liveliest and finest, with the added interest of its often turning at one and the same time to the fullest sincerity and to a perversity of the most "evolved"?—since I can not dispense with that sign of truth. Never was a young singer either less obviously sentimental or less addicted to the mere twang of the guitar; at the same time that it was always his personal experience or his *curious*, his not a little defiantly excogitated, inner vision that he sought to catch; some of the odd fashion of his play with which latter seems on occasion to preponderate over the truly pleasing

poet's appeal to beauty or cultivated habit of grace. Odd enough, no doubt, that Rupert should appear to have had well-nigh in horror the cultivation of grace for its own sake, as we say, and yet should really not have disfigured his poetic countenance by a single touch quotable as showing this. The medal of the mere pleasant had always a reverse for him, and it was generally in that substitute he was most interested. We catch in him reaction upon reaction, the succession of these conducing to his entirely unashamed poetic complexity, and of course one observation always to be made about him, one reminder always to be gratefully welcomed, is that we are dealing after all with one of the *youngest* quantities of art and character taken together that ever arrived at an irresistible appeal. His irony, his liberty, his pleasantry, his paradox, and what I have called his perversity, are all nothing if not young; and I may as well say at once for him that I find in the imagination of their turning in time, dreadful time, to something more balanced and harmonised, a difficulty insuperable. The self-consciousness, the poetic, of his so free figuration (in verse, only in verse, oddly enough) of the unpleasant to behold, to touch, or even to smell, was certainly, I think, nothing if not "self-conscious," but there were so many things in his consciousness, which was never in the least unpeopled, that it would have been a rare chance had his projection of the self that we are so apt to make an object of invidious allusion stayed out. What it all really most comes to, you feel again, is that none of his impulses pros-

pered in solitude, or, for that matter, were so much as permitted to mumble their least scrap there; he was predestined and condemned to sociability, which no league of neglect could have deprived him of even had it speculatively tried: whereby what was it but his own image that he most saw reflected in other faces? It would still have been there, it couldn't possibly have succeeded in not being, even had he closed his eyes to it with elaborate tightness. The only neglect must have been on his own side, where indeed it did take form in that of as signal an opportunity to become "spoiled," probably, as ever fell in a brilliant young man's way: so that to help out my comprehension of the unsightly and unsavoury, sufficiently wondered at, with which his muse repeatedly embraced the occasion to associate herself, I take the thing for a declaration of the idea that he might himself prevent the spoiling so far as possible. He could in fact prevent nothing, the wave of his fortune and his favour continuing so to carry him; which is doubtless one of the reasons why, through our general sense that nothing could possibly not be of the last degree of rightness in him, what would have been wrong in others, literally in any creature *but* him, like for example "A Channel Passage" of his first volume, simply puts on, while this particular muse stands anxiously by, a kind of dignity of experiment quite consistent with our congratulating her, at the same time, as soon as it is over. What was "A Channel Passage" thus but a flourish marked with the sign of all his flourishes, that of being a success and having fruition?

Though it performed the extraordinary feat of directing the contents of the poet's stomach straight at the object of his displeasure, we feel that, by some excellent grace, the object is not at all reached —too many things, and most of all, too innocently enormous a cynicism, standing in the way and themselves receiving the tribute; having in a word, impatient young cynicism as they are, *that* experience as well as various things.

III

No detail of Mr Marsh's admirable memoir may I allow myself to anticipate. I can only announce it as a picture, with all the elements in iridescent fusion, of the felicity that fairly dogged Rupert's steps, as we may say, and that never allowed him to fall below its measure. We shall read into it even more relations than nominally appear, and every one of them again a flourish, every one of them a connection with his time, a "sampling" of it at its most multitudinous and most characteristic; every one of them too a record of the state of some other charmed, not less than charming party—even when the letter-writer's expression of the interest, the amusement, the play of fancy, of taste, of whatever sort of appreciation or reaction for his own spirit, is the ostensible note. This is what I mean in especial by the constancy with which, and the cost at which, perhaps not less, for others, the poetic sensibility was maintained and guaranteed. It was

as genuine as if he had been a bard perched on an eminence with a harp, and yet it was arranged for, as we may say, by the close consensus of those who had absolutely to know their relation with him but as a delight and who wanted therefore to keep him, to the last point, true to himself. His complete curiosity and sociability might have made him, on these lines, factitious, if it had not happened that the people he so variously knew and the contacts he enjoyed were just of the kind to promote most his facility and vivacity and intelligence of life. They were all young together, allowing for three or four notable, by which I mean far from the least responsive, exceptions; they were all fresh and free and acute and aware and in "the world," when not out of it; all together at the high speculative, the high talkative pitch of the initiational stage of these latest years, the informed and animated, the so consciously non-benighted, geniality of which was to make him the clearest and most projected poetic case, with the question of difficulty and doubt and frustration most solved, the question of the immediate and its implications most in order for him, that it was possible to conceive. He had found at once to his purpose a wondrous enough old England, an England breaking out into numberless assertions of a new awareness, into liberties of high and clean, even when most sceptical and discursive, young intercourse; a carnival of half anxious and half elated criticism, all framed and backgrounded in still richer accumulations, both moral and material, or, as who should say, pictorial, of the matter of

course and the taken for granted. Nothing could have been in greater contrast, one cannot too much insist, to the situation of the traditional lonely lyrist who yearns for connections and relations yet to be made and whose difficulty, lyrical, emotional, personal, social or intellectual, has thereby so little in common with any embarrassment of choice. The author of the pages before us was perhaps the young lyrist, in all the annals of verse, who, having the largest luxury of choice, yet remained least "demoralised" by it—how little demoralised he was to round off his short history by showing.

It was into these conditions, thickening and thickening, in their comparative serenity, up to the eleventh hour, that the War came smashing down; but of the basis, the great garden ground, all green and russet and silver, all a tissue of distinguished and yet so easy occasions, so improvised extensions, which they had already placed at his service and that of his extraordinarily amiable and constantly enlarged "set" for the exercise of *their* dealing with the rest of the happy earth in punctuating interludes, it is the office of our few but precious documents to enable us to judge. The interlude that here concerns us most is that of the year spent in his journey round a considerable part of the world in 1913–14, testifying with a charm that increases as he goes to that quest of unprejudiced culture, the true poetic, the vision of the life of man, which was to prove the liveliest of his impulses. It was not indeed under the flag of that research that he offered himself for the Army almost immediately

after his return to England—and even if when a young man was so essentially a poet we need see no act in him as a prosaic alternative. The misfortune of this set of letters from New York and Boston, from Canada and Samoa, addressed, for the most part, to a friendly London evening journal is, alas, in the fact that they are of so moderate a quantity; for we make him out as steadily more vivid and delightful while his opportunity grows. He is touching at first, inevitably quite juvenile, in the measure of his good faith; we feel him not a little lost and lonely and stranded in the New York pandemonium —obliged to throw himself upon sky-scrapers and the overspread blackness pricked out in a flickering fury of imaged advertisement for want of some more interesting view of character and manners. We long to take him by the hand and show him finer lights—eyes of but meaner range, after all, being adequate to the gape at the vertical business blocks and the lurid sky-clamour for more dollars. We feel in a manner his sensibility wasted and would fain turn it on to the capture of deeper meanings. But we must leave him to himself and to youth's facility of wonder; he is amused, beguiled, struck on the whole with as many differences as we could expect, and sufficiently reminded, no doubt, of the number of words he is restricted to. It is moreover his sign, as it is that of the poetic turn of mind in general that we seem to catch him alike in anticipations or divinations, and in lapses and freshnesses, of experience that surprise us. He makes various reflections, some of them all perceptive and ingenious

—as about the faces, the men's in particular, seen in the streets, the public conveyances and elsewhere; though falling a little short, in his friendly wondering way, of that bewildered apprehension of monotony of type, of modelling lost in the desert, which we might have expected of him, and of the question above all of what is destined to become of that more and more vanishing quantity the American nose other than Judaic.

What we note in particular is that he likes, to all appearance, many more things than he doesn't, and how superlatively he is struck with the promptitude and wholeness of the American welcome and of all its friendly service. What it is but too easy, with the pleasure of having known him, to read into all this is the operation of his own irresistible quality, and of the state of felicity he clearly created just by appearing as a party to the social relation. He moves and circulates to our vision as so naturally, so beautifully undesigning a weaver of that spell, that we feel comparatively little of the story told even by his diverted report of it; so much fuller a report would surely proceed, could we appeal to their memory, their sense of poetry, from those into whose ken he floated. It is impossible not to figure him, to the last felicity, as he comes and goes, presenting himself always with a singular effect both of suddenness and of the readiest rightness; we should always have liked to be there, wherever it was, for the justification of our own fond confidence and the pleasure of seeing it unfailingly spread and spread. The ironies and paradoxes of his verse,

in all this record, fall away from him; he takes to direct observation and accepts with perfect good-humour any hazards of contact, some of the shocks of encounter proving more muffled for him than might, as I say, have been feared—witness the American Jew with whom he appears to have spent some hours in Canada; and of course the "word" of the whole thing is that he simply reaped at every turn the harmonising benefit that his presence conferred. This it is in especial that makes us regret so much the scanting, as we feel it, of his story; it deprives us in just that proportion of certain of the notes of his appearance and his "success." *There* was the poetic fact involved—that, being so gratefully apprehended everywhere, his own response was inevitably prescribed and pitched as the perfect friendly and genial and liberal thing. Moreover, the value of his having so let himself loose in the immensity tells more at each step in favour of his style; the pages from Canada, where as an impressionist, he increasingly finds his feet, and even finds to the same increase a certain comfort of association, are better than those from the States, while those from the Pacific Islands rapidly brighten and enlarge their inspiration. This part of his adventure was clearly the great success and fell in with his fancy, amusing and quickening and rewarding him, more than anything in the whole revelation. He lightly performs the miracle, to my own sense, which R. L. Stevenson, which even Pierre Loti, taking however long a rope, had not performed; he charmingly conjures away—though

in this prose more than in the verse of his second volume—the marked tendency of the whole exquisite region to insist on the secret of its charm, when incorrigibly moved to do so, only at the expense of its falling a little flat, or turning a little stale, on our hands. I have for myself at least marked the tendency, and somehow felt it point a graceless moral, the moral that as there are certain faces too well produced by nature to be producible again by the painter, the portraitist, so there are certain combinations of earthly ease, of the natural and social art of giving pleasure, which fail of character, or accent, even of the power to interest, under the strain of transposition or of emphasis. Rupert, with an instinct of his own, transposes and insists only in the right degree; or what it doubtless comes to is that we simply see him arrested by so vivid a picture of the youth of the world at its blandest as to make all his culture seem a waste and all his questions a vanity. That is apparently the very effect of the Pacific life as those who dip into it seek, or feel that they are expected to seek, to report it; but it reports itself somehow through these pages, smilingly cools itself off in them, with the lightest play of the fan ever placed at its service. Never, clearly, had he been on such good terms with the hour, never found the life of the senses so anticipate the life of the imagination, or the life of the imagination so content itself with the life of the senses; it is all an abundance of amphibious felicity—he was as incessant and insatiable a swimmer as if he had been a triton framed for a decoration;

and one half makes out that some low-lurking instinct, some vague foreboding of what awaited him, on his own side the globe, in the air of so-called civilisation, prompted him to drain to the last drop the whole perfect negation of the acrid. He might have been waiting for the tide of the insipid to begin to flow again, as it seems ever doomed to do when the acrid, the saving acrid, has already ebbed; at any rate his holiday had by the end of the springtime of 1914 done for him all it could, without a grain of waste—his assimilations being neither loose nor literal, and he came back to England as promiscuously qualified, as variously quickened, as his best friends could wish for fine production and fine illustration in some order still awaiting sharp definition. Never certainly had the free poetic sense in him more rejoiced in an incorruptible sincerity.

IV

He was caught up of course after the shortest interval by the strong rush of that general inspiration in which at first all differences, all individual relations to the world he lived in, seemed almost ruefully or bewilderedly to lose themselves. The pressing thing was of a sudden that youth was youth and genius community and sympathy. He plunged into that full measure of these things which simply made and spread itself as it gathered them in, made itself of responses and faiths and understandings

that were all the while in themselves acts of curiosity, romantic and poetic throbs and wonderments, with reality, as it seemed to call itself, breaking in after a fashion that left the whole past pale, and that yet could flush at every turn with meanings and visions borrowing their expression from whatever had, among those squandered preliminaries, those too merely sportive intellectual and critical values, happened to make most for the higher truth. Of the successions of his matter of history at this time Mr Marsh's memoir is the infinitely touching record —touching after the fact, but to the accompaniment even at the time of certain now almost ineffable reflections; this especially, I mean, if one happened to be then not wholly without familiar vision of him. What could strike one more, for the immense occasion, than the measure that might be involved in it of desolating and heart-breaking waste, waste of quality, waste for that matter of quantity, waste of all the rich redundancies, all the light and all the golden store, which up to then had formed the very price and grace of life? Yet out of the depths themselves of this question rose the other, the tormenting, the sickening and at the same time the strangely sustaining, of why, since the offering couldn't at best be anything but great, it wouldn't be great just in proportion to its purity, or in other words its wholeness, everything in it that could make it most radiant and restless. Exquisite at such times the hushed watch of the mere hovering spectator unrelieved by any action of his own to

take, which consists at once of so much wonder for why the finest of the fine should, to the sacrifice of the faculty we most know them by, have to become mere morsels in the huge promiscuity, and of the thrill of seeing that they add more than ever to our knowledge and our passion, which somehow thus becomes at the same time an unfathomable abyss.

Rupert, who had joined the Naval Brigade, took part in the rather distractedly improvised—as it at least at the moment appeared—movement for the relief of the doomed Antwerp, but was, later on, after the return of the force so engaged, for a few days in London, whither he had come up from camp in Dorsetshire, briefly invalided; thanks to which accident I had on a couple of occasions my last sight of him. It was all auspiciously, well-nigh extravagantly, congruous; nothing certainly could have been called more modern than all the elements and suggestions of his situation for the hour, the very spot in London that could best serve as a centre for vibrations the keenest and most various; a challenge to the appreciation of life, to that of the whole range of the possible English future, at its most uplifting. He had not yet so much struck me as an admirable nature *en disponibilité* and such as any cause, however high, might swallow up with a sense of being the sounder and sweeter for. More definitely perhaps the young poet, with all the wind alive in his sails, was as evident there in the guise of the young soldier and

the thrice welcome young friend, who yet, I all recognisably remember, insisted on himself as little as ever in either character, and seemed even more disposed than usual not to let his intelligibility interfere with his modesty. He promptly recovered and returned to camp, whence it was testified that his specific practical aptitude, under the lively call, left nothing to be desired—a fact that expressed again, to the perception of his circle, with what truth the spring of inspiration worked in him, in the sense, I mean, that his imagination itself shouldered and made light of the material load. It had not yet, at the same time, been more associatedly active in a finer sense; my own next apprehension of it at least was in reading the five admirable sonnets that had been published in "New Numbers" after the departure of his contingent for the campaign at the Dardanelles. To read these in the light of one's personal knowledge of him was to draw from them, inevitably, a meaning still deeper seated than their noble beauty, an authority, of the purest, attended with which his name inscribes itself in its own character on the great English scroll. The impression, the admiration, the anxiety settled immediately—to my own sense at least—as upon something that would but too sharply feed them, falling in as it did with that whole particularly animated vision of him of which I have spoken. He had never seemed more animated with our newest and least deluded, least conventionalised life and perception and sensibility, and that formula

of his so distinctively fortunate, his overflowing share in our most developed social heritage which had already glimmered, began with this occasion to hang about him as one of the aspects, really a shining one, of his fate.

So I remember irrepressibly thinking and feeling, unspeakably apprehending, in a word; and so the whole exquisite exhalation of his own consciousness in the splendid sonnets, attach whatever essentially or exclusively poetic value to it we might, baffled or defied us as with a sort of supreme rightness. Everything about him of keenest and brightest (yes, absolutely of brightest) suggestion made so for his having been charged with every privilege, every humour, of our merciless actuality, our fatal excess of opportunity, that what indeed could the full assurance of this be but that, finding in him the most charming object in its course, the great tide was to lift him and sweep him away? Questions and reflections after the fact perhaps, yet haunting for the time and during the short interval that was still to elapse—when, with the sudden news that he *had* met his doom, an irrepressible "of course, of course!" contributed its note well-nigh of support. It was as if the peculiar richness of his youth had itself marked its limit, so that what his own spirit was inevitably to feel about his "chance"—inevitably because both the high pitch of the romantic and the ironic and the opposed abyss of the real came together in it—required, in the wondrous way, the consecration of the event. The event came

indeed not in the manner prefigured by him in the repeatedly perfect line, that of the received death-stroke, the fall in action, discounted as such; which might have seemed very much because even the harsh logic and pressure of history were tender of him at the last and declined to go through more than the form of their function, discharging it with the least violence and surrounding it as with a legendary light. He was taken ill, as an effect of blood-poisoning, on his way from Alexandria to Gallipoli, and, getting ominously and rapidly worse, was removed from his transport to a French hospital ship, where, irreproachably cared for, he died in a few hours and without coming to consciousness. I deny myself any further anticipation of the story to which further noble associations attach, and the merest outline of which indeed tells it and rounds it off absolutely as the right harmony would have it. It is perhaps even a touch beyond any dreamt-of harmony that, under omission of no martial honour, he was to be carried by comrades and devoted waiting sharers, whose evidence survives them, to the steep summit of a Greek island of infinite grace and there placed in such earth and amid such beauty of light and shade and embracing prospect as that the fondest reading of his young lifetime could have suggested nothing better. It struck us at home, I mean, as symbolising with the last refinement his whole instinct of selection and response, his relation to the overcharged appeal of his scene and hour. How could he have shown

more the young English poetic possibility and faculty in which we were to seek the freshest reflection of the intelligence and the soul of the new generation? The generosity, I may fairly say the joy, of his contribution to the general perfect way makes a monument of his high rest there at the heart of all that was once noblest in history.

HENRY JAMES

I

ARRIVAL

HOWEVER sedulously he may have avoided a preparatory reading of those 'impressions' of America which our hurried and observant Great continually record for the instruction of both nations, the pilgrim who is crossing the Atlantic for the first time cannot approach Sandy Hook Bar with so completely blank a mind as he would wish. So, at least, I found. It is not so much that the recent American invasion of London music-halls has bitten into one's brain a very definite taste of a jerking, vital, *bizarre* 'rag-time' civilisation. But the various and vivid comments of friends to whom the news of a traveller's departure is broken excite and predispose the imagination. That so many people who had been there should have such different and decided opinions about it! It must be at least remarkable. I felt the thrill of an explorer before I started. "A country without conversation," said a philosopher. "The

big land has a big heart," wrote a kindly scholar; and, by the same post, from another critic, "that land of crushing hospitality!" "It's Hell, but it's fine," an artist told me. "El Cuspidorado," remarked an Oxford man, brilliantly. But one wiser than all the rest wrote: "Think gently of the Americans. They are so very young; and so very anxious to appear grown-up; and so very lovable." This was more generous than the unvarying comment of ordinary English friends when they heard of my purpose, "My God!" And it was more precise than those nineteen several Americans, to each of whom I said, "I am going to visit America," and each of whom replied, after long reflection, "Wal! it's a great country!"

Travelling by the ordinary routes, you meet the American people a week before you meet America. And my excitement to discover what, precisely, this nation was *at*, was inflamed rather than damped by the attitude of a charming American youth who crossed by the same boat. That simplicity that is not far down in any American was very beautifully on the delightful surface with him. The second day out he sidled shyly up to me. "Of what nationality *are* you?" he asked.

His face showed bewilderment when he heard. "I thought all Englishmen had moustaches," he said. I told him of the infinite variety, within the homogeneity, of our race. He did not listen, but settled down near me with the eager kindliness of a child. "You know," he said, "you'll never understand America. No, Sir. No Englishman can understand America. I've been in London. In your Houses of Parliament there is one door for peers to go in at, and one for ordinary people. Did I laugh some when I saw that? You bet your life, America's not like that. In America one man's just as good as another. You'll never understand America." I was all humility. His theme and his friendliness fired him. He rose with a splendour which, I had to confess to myself, England could never have given to him. "Would you like to hear me re-cite to you the Declaration of Independence?" he asked. And he did.

So it was with a fairly blank mind, and yet a hope of understanding, or at least of seeing, something very remarkably fresh, that I woke to hear we were in harbour, and tumbled out on deck at six of a fine summer morning to view a new world. New York Harbour is loveliest at night perhaps. On the Staten

Island ferry-boat you slip out from the darkness right under the immense sky-scrapers. As they recede they form into a mass together, heaping up one behind another, fire-lined and majestic, sentinel over the black, gold-streaked waters. Their cliff-like boldness is the greater, because to either side sweep in the East River and the Hudson River, leaving this piled promontory between. To the right hangs the great stretch of the Brooklyn Suspension Bridge, its slight curve very purely outlined with light; over it luminous trams, like shuttles of fire, are thrown across and across, continually weaving the stuff of human existence. From further off all these lights dwindle to a radiant semicircle that gazes out over the expanse with a quiet, mysterious expectancy. Far away seaward you may see the low golden glare of Coney Island.

But there was beauty in the view that morning, also, half an hour after sunrise. New York, always the cleanest and least smoky of cities, lay asleep in a queer, pearly, hourless light. A thin mist softened the further outlines. The water was opalescent under a silver sky, cool and dim, very slightly ruffled by the sweet wind that followed us in from the sea. A few streamers of smoke flew

above the city, oblique and parallel, pennants of our civilisation. The space of water is great, and so the vast buildings do not tower above one as they do from the street. Scale is lost, and they might be any size. The impression is, rather, of long, low buildings stretching down to the water's edge on every side, and innumerable low black wharves and jetties and piers. And at one point, the lower end of the island on which the city proper stands, rose that higher clump of the great buildings, the Singer, the Woolworth, and the rest. Their strength, almost severity, of line and the lightness of their colour gave a kind of classical feeling, classical, and yet not of Europe. It had the air, this block of masonry, of edifices built to satisfy some faith, for more than immediate ends. Only, the faith was unfamiliar. But if these buildings embodied its nature, it is cold and hard and light, like the steel that is their heart. The first sight of these strange fanes has queer resemblances to the first sight of that lonely and secret group by Pisa's walls. It came upon me, at that moment, that they could not have been dreamed and made without some nobility. Perhaps the hour lent them sanctity. For I have often noticed since

that in the early morning, and again for a little about sunset, the sky-scrapers are no longer merely the means and local convenience for men to pursue their purposes, but acquire that characteristic of the great buildings of the world, an existence and meaning of their own.

Our boat moved up the harbour and along the Hudson River with a superb and courteous stateliness. Round her snorted and scuttled and puffed the multitudinous strange denizens of the harbour. Tugs, steamers, queer-shaped ferry-boats, long rafts carrying great lines of trucks from railway to railway, dredgers, motor-boats, even a sailing-boat or two; for the day's work was beginning. Among them, with that majesty that only a liner entering a harbour has, she went, progressed, had her moving—English contains no word for such a motion—"*incessu patuit dea*." A goddess entering fairyland, I thought; for the huddled beauty of these buildings and the still, silver expanse of the water seemed unreal. Then I looked down at the water immediately beneath me, and knew that New York was a real city. All kinds of refuse went floating by: bits of wood, straw from barges, bottles, boxes, paper, occasionally a

dead cat or dog, hideously bladder-like, its four paws stiff and indignant towards heaven.

This analysis of fairyland turned me towards the statue of Liberty, already passed and growing distant. It is one of those things you have long wanted to see and haven't expected to admire, which, seen, give you a double thrill, that they're at last *there*, and that they're better than your hopes. For Liberty stands nobly. Americans, always shy about their country, have learnt from the ridicule which Europeans, on mixed æsthetic and moral grounds, pour on this statue, to dismiss it with an apologetic laugh. Yet it is fine—until you get near enough to see its clumsiness. I admired the great gesture of it. A hand fell on my shoulder, and a voice said, "Look hard at that, young man! That's the first time you've seen Liberty—and it will be the last till you turn your back on this country again." It was an American fellow-passenger, one of the tall, thin type of American, with pale blue eyes of an idealistic, disappointed expression, and an Indian profile. The other half of America, personated by a small, bumptious, eager, brown-faced man, with a cigar raking at an irritating angle from the corner of his mouth, joined in with, "Wal!

I should smile, I guess this is the Land of Freedom, anyway." The tall man swung round: "Freedom! do you call it a free land, where——" He gave instances of the power of the dollar. The other man kept up the argument by spitting and by asseveration. As the busy little tugs, with rugs on their noses, butted the great liner into her narrow dock, the pessimist launched his last shafts. The short man denied nothing. He drew the cigar from his lips, shot it back with a popping noise into the round hole cigars had worn at the corner of his mouth, and said, "Anyway, it's some country." I was introduced to America.

II

NEW YORK

In five things America excels modern England—fish, architecture, jokes, drinks, and children's clothes. There may be others. Of these I am certain. The jokes and drinks, which curiously resemble each other, are the best. There is a cheerful violence about them; they take their respective kingdoms by storm. All the lesser things one has heard turn out to be delightfully true. The first hour in America proves them. People here talk with an American accent; their teeth are inlaid with gold; the mouths of car-conductors move slowly, slowly, with an oblique oval motion, for they are chewing; pavements are 'sidewalks.' It is all true. . . . But there were other things one expected, though in no precise form. What, for instance, would it be like, the feeling of whatever democracy America has secured?

I landed, rather forlorn, that first morning, on the immense covered wharf where the

Customs mysteries were to be celebrated. The place was dominated by a large, dirty, vociferous man, coatless, in a black shirt and black apron. His mouth and jaw were huge; he looked like a caricaturist's Roosevelt. 'Express Company' was written on his forehead; labels of a thousand colours, printed slips, pencils and pieces of string, hung from his pockets and his hands, were held behind his ears and in his mouth. I laid my situation and my incompetence before him, and learnt right where to go and right when to go there. Then he flung a vast, dingy arm round my shoulders, and bellowed, "'We'll have your baggage right along to your hotel in two hours." It was a lie, but kindly. That grimy and generous embrace left me startled, but an initiate into Democracy.

The other evening I went a lonely ramble, to try to detect the essence of New York. A wary eavesdropper can always surprise the secret of a city, through chance scraps of conversation, or by spying from a window, or by coming suddenly round corners. I started on a 'car.' American tram-cars are open all along the side and can be entered at any point in it. The side is divided by vertical bars. It looks like a cage with the horizontal

lines taken out. Between these vertical bars you squeeze into the seat. If the seat opposite you is full, you swing yourself along the bars by your hands till you find room. The Americans become terrifyingly expert at this. I have seen them, fat, middle-aged business men, scampering up and down the face of the cars by means of their hands, swinging themselves over and round and above each other, like nothing in the world so much as the monkeys at the Zoo. It is a people informed with vital energy. I believe that this exercise, and the habit of drinking a lot of water between meals, are the chief causes of their good health.

The Broadway car runs mostly along the backbone of the queer island on which this city stands. So the innumerable parallel streets that cross it curve down and away; and at this time street after street to the west reveals, and seems to drop into, a mysterious evening sky, full of dull reds and yellows, amber and pale green, and a few pink flecks, and in the midst, sometimes, the flushed, smoke-veiled face of the sun. Then greyness, broken by these patches of misty colour, settles into the lower channels of the New York streets; while the upper heights of the

sky-scrapers, clear of the roofs, are still lit on the sunward side with a mellow glow, curiously serene. To the man in the mirk of the street, they seem to exude this light from the great spaces of brick. At this time the cars, always polyglot, are filled with shop-hands and workers, and no English at all is heard. One is surrounded with Yiddish, Italian, and Greek, broken by Polish, or Russian, or German. Some American anthropologists claim that the children of these immigrants show marked changes, in the shape of skull and face, towards the American type. It may be so. But the people who surround one are mostly European-born. They represent very completely that H.C.F. of Continental appearance which is labelled in the English mind 'looking like a foreigner'; being short, swarthy, gesticulatory, full of clatter, indeterminately alien. Only in their dress and gait have they—or at least the men among them—become at all American.

The American by race walks better than we; more freely, with a taking swing, and almost with grace. How much of this is due to living in a democracy, and how much to wearing no braces, it is very difficult to determine. But certainly it is the land of

belts, and therefore of more loosely moving bodies. This, and the padded shoulders of the coats, and the loosely-cut trousers, make a figure more presentable, at a distance, than most urban civilisations turn out. Also, Americans take their coats off, which is sensible; and they can do it the more beautifully because they are belted, and not braced. They take their coats off anywhere and anywhen, and somehow it strikes the visitor as the most symbolic thing about them. They have not yet thought of discarding collars; but they are unashamedly shirt-sleeved. Any sculptor, seeking to figure this Republic in stone, must carve, in future, a young man in shirt-sleeves, open-faced, pleasant, and rather vulgar, straw hat on the back of his head, his trousers full and sloppy, his coat over his arm. The motto written beneath will be, of course, 'This is some country.' The philosophic gazer on such a monument might get some way towards understanding the making of the Panama Canal, that exploit that no European nation could have carried out.

What facial type the sculptor would give the youth is harder to determine, and very hard to describe. The American race seems to have developed two classes, and only two,

the upper-middle and the lower-middle. Their faces are very distinct. The upper-class head is long, often fine about the forehead and eyes, and very cleanly outlined. The eyes have an odd, tired pathos in them—mixed with the friendliness that is so admirable—as if of a perpetual never quite successful effort to understand something. It is like the face of an only child who has been brought up in the company of adults. I am convinced it is partly due to the endeavour to set their standards by the culture and traditions of older nations. But the mouth of such men is the most typical feature. It is small, tight, and closed downwards at the corners, the lower lip very slightly protruding. It has little expression in it, and no curves. There the Puritan comes out. But no other nation has a mouth like this. It is shared to some extent by the lower classes; but their mouths tend to be wider and more expressive. Their foreheads are meaner, and their eyes hard, but the whole face rather more adaptive and in touch with life. These, anyhow, are the types that strike one in the Eastern cities. And there are intermediate varieties, as of the genial business-man, with the narrow forehead and the wide, smooth—the too wide

and too smooth—lower face. Smoothness is the one unfailing characteristic. Why do American faces hardly ever wrinkle? Is it the absence of a soul? It must be. For it is less true of the Bostonian than of the ordinary business American, in whose life exhilaration and depression take the place of joy and suffering. The women's faces are more indeterminate, not very feminine; many of them wear those 'invisible' pince-nez which centre glitteringly about the bridge of the nose, and get from them a curious air of intelligence. Handsome people of both sexes are very common; beautiful, and pretty, ones very rare. . . .

I slipped from my car up about Fortieth Street, the region where the theatres and restaurants are, the 'roaring forties.' Broadway here might be the offspring of Shaftesbury Avenue and Leicester Square, with, somehow, some of Fleet Street also in its ancestry. I passed two men on the sidewalk, their hats on the back of their heads, arguing fiercely. One had slightly long hair. The other looked the more truculent, and was saying to him, intensely, "See here! We con—tracted with you to supply us with sonnets at five dollars per sonnet——" I passed up a side-street, one

of those deserted ways that abound just off the big streets, resorts, apparently, for such people and things as are not quite strident or not quite energetic enough for the ordinary glare of life; dim places, fusty with hesternal excitements and the thrills of yesteryear. Against a flight of desolate steps leant a notice. I stopped to read it. It said:

> "You must see Cockie,
> Positively the only bird that can both dance and sing.
> She is almost superhuman."

There was no explanation; Cockie may have been dead for years. I went, musing on her possible fates, towards the pride and spaciousness of Fifth Avenue.

Fifth Avenue is handsome, the handsomest street imaginable. It is what the streets of German cities try to be. The buildings are large, square, 'imposing,' built with the solidity of opulence. The street, as a whole, has a character and an air of achievement. "Whatever else may be doubted or denied, American civilisation has produced this." One feels rich and safe as one walks. Back in Broadway, New York dropped her mask, and began to betray herself once again. A little crowd, expressionless, intent, and volatile,

before a small shop, drew me. In the shop-window was a young man, pleasant-faced, a little conscious, and a little bored, dressed very lightly in what might have been a runner's costume. He was bowing, twisting, and posturing in a slow rhythm. From time to time he would put a large card on a little stand in the corner. The cards bore various legends. He would display a card that said, "THIS UNDERWEAR DOES NOT IMPEDE THE MOVEMENT OF THE BODY IN ANY DIRECTION." Then he moved his body in every direction, from position to position, probable or improbable, and was not impeded. With a terrible dumb patience he turned the next card: "IT GIVES WITH THE BODY IN VIOLENT EXERCISING." The young man leapt suddenly, lunged, smote imaginary balls, belaboured invisible opponents, ran with immense speed but no progress, was thrown to earth by the Prince of the Air, kicked, struggled, then bounded to his feet again. But all this without a word. "IT ENABLES YOU TO KEEP COOL WHILE EXERCISING." The young man exercised, and yet was cool. He did this, I discovered later, for many hours a day.

Not daring to imagine his state of mind, I hurried off through Union Square. One of

the many daily fire-alarms had gone; the traffic was drawn to one side, and several fire-engines came, with clanging of bells and shouting, through the space, gleaming with brass, splendid in their purpose. Before the thrill in the heart had time to die, or the traffic to close up, swung through an immense open motor-car driven by a young mechanic. It was luxuriously appointed, and had the air of a private car being returned from repairing. The man in it had an almost Swinburnian mane of red hair, blowing back in the wind, catching the last lights of day. He was clad, as such people often are in this country these hot days, only in a suit of yellow overalls, so that his arms and shoulders and neck and chest were bare. He was big, well-made, and strong, and he drove the car, not wildly, but a little too fast, leaning back rather insolently, conscious of power. In private life, no doubt, a very ordinary youth, interested only in baseball scores; but in this brief passage he seemed like a Greek god, in a fantastically modern, yet not unworthy way emblemed and incarnate, or like the spirit of Henley's 'Song of Speed.' So I found a better image of America for my sculptor than the shirt-sleeved young man.

III

NEW YORK (*continued*)

THE hotel into which the workings of blind chance have thrown me is given over to commercial travellers. Its life is theirs, and the few English tourists creep in and out with the shy, bewildered dignity of their race and class. These American commercial travellers are called 'drummers'; drummers in the most endless and pointless and extraordinary of wars. They have the air and appearance of devotees, men set aside, roaming preachers of a *jehad* whose meaning they have forgotten. They seem to be invariably of the short, dark type. The larger, fair-haired, long-headed men are common in business, but not in 'drumming.' The drummer's eyes have a hard, rapt expression. He is not interested in the romance of the road, like an English commercial traveller, only in its ever-changing end. These people are for ever sending off and receiving telegrams, messages, and cablegrams; they are continually telephoning;

stenographers are in waiting to record their inspirations. In the intervals of activity they relapse into a curious trance, husbanding their vitality for the next crisis. I have watched them with terror and fascination. All day there are numbers of them sitting, immote and vacant, in rows and circles on the hard chairs in the hall. They are never smoking, never reading a paper, never even chewing. The expressions of their faces never change. It is impossible to guess what, or if anything, is in their minds. Hour upon hour they remain. Occasionally one will rise, in obedience to some call or revelation incomprehensible to us, and move out through the door into the clang and confusion of Broadway.

It all confirms the impression that grows on the visitor to America that Business has developed insensibly into a Religion, in more than the light, metaphorical sense of the words. It has its ritual and theology, its high places and its jargon, as well as its priests and martyrs. One of its more mystical manifestations is in advertisement. America has a childlike faith in advertising. They advertise here, everywhere, and in all ways. They shout your most private and sacred wants at you. Nothing is untouched. Every day I

pass a wall, some five hundred square feet of which a gentleman has taken to declare that he is 'out' to break the Undertakers' Trust. Half the advertisement is a coloured photograph of himself. The rest is, "See what I give you for 75 dols.!" and a list of what he does give. He gives everything that the most morbid taphologist could suggest, beginning with "splendidly carved full-size oak casket, with black ivory handles. Four draped Flambeaux . . ." and going on to funereal ingenuities that would have overwhelmed Mausolus, and make death impossible for a refined man.

But there are heights as well as depths. I have been privileged with some intimate glances into the greatest of those peculiarly American institutions, the big departmental stores. Materially it is an immense building, containing all things that any upper-middle-class person could conceivably want. Such a store includes even Art, with the same bland omnipotence. If you wander into the vast auditorium, it is equal chances whether you hear a work of Beethoven, Victor Herbert, Schonberg, or Mr Hirsch. If you are 'artistic,' you may choose between a large coloured photograph of the Eiffel Tower, a carbon

print of Botticelli, and a reproduction of an 'improvisation' by Herr Kandinsky. You may buy an Elizabethan dining-table, a Græco-Roman bronze, the latest dress designed by M. Bakst, or a packet of pins. Or you may sit and muse on the life of the employee of this place, who gets from it all that in less favoured civilisations family, guild, club, township, and nationality have given him or her. As a child he gets education, then evening-classes, continuation-schools, gymnasia, military training, swimming-baths, orchestra, facilities for the study of anything under the sun, from palæography to Cherokee, libraries, holiday-camps, hospitals, ever-present medical attendance, and at the end a pension, and, I suppose, a store cemetery. And all for the price of a few hours' work a day, and a little loyalty to the 'establishment.' Can human hearts desire more? And, when all millionaires are as sensible, will they? In industries and businesses like this, where the majority of the employed are women, it ought to be a pretty stable sort of millennium. Men, perhaps, take longer to learn that kind of 'loyalty.'

In one corner of this store is the advertising department. There are gathered poets,

artists, *littérateurs*, and mere intellectuals, all engaged in explaining to the upper middle-classes what there is for them to buy and why they should buy it. It is a life of good salary, steady hours, sufficient leisure, and entire dignity. There is no vulgarity in this advertising, but the most perfect taste and great artistic daring and novelty. The most 'advanced' productions of Europe are scanned for ideas and suggestions. Two of the leading young 'post-impressionist' painters in Paris, whose names are just beginning to be known in England, have been designing posters for this store for years. I stood and watched with awe a young American genius doing entirely Matisse-like illustrations to some notes on summer suitings. "We give our artists a free hand," said the very intelligent lady in charge of that section; "except, of course, for nudes or improprieties. And we don't allow any figures of people *smoking*. Some of our customers object very strongly. . ."

Cities, like cats, will reveal themselves at night. There comes an hour of evening when lower Broadway, the business end of the town, is deserted. And if, having felt yourself immersed in men and the frenzy of cities all day, you stand out in the street in this

sudden hush, you will hear, like a strange questioning voice from another world, the melancholy boom of a foghorn, and realise that not half a mile away are the waters of the sea, and some great liner making its slow way out to the Atlantic. After that, the lights come out up-town, and the New York of theatres and vaudevilles and restaurants begins to roar and flare. The merciless lights throw a mask of unradiant glare on the human beings in the streets, making each face hard, set, wolfish, terribly blue. The chorus of voices becomes shriller. The buildings tower away into obscurity, looking strangely theatrical, because lit from below. And beyond them soars the purple roof of the night. A stranger of another race, loitering here, might cast his eyes up, in a vague wonder what powers, kind or maleficent, controlled or observed this whirlpool. He would find only this unresponsive canopy of black, unpierced even, if the seeker stood near a centre of lights, by any star. But while he looks, away up in the sky, out of the gulfs of night, spring two vast fiery tooth-brushes, erect, leaning towards each other, and hanging on to the bristles of them a little Devil, little but gigantic, who kicks and wriggles and

glares. After a few moments the Devil, baffled by the firmness of the bristles, stops, hangs still, rolls his eyes, moon-large, and, in a fury of disappointment, goes out, leaving only the night, blacker and a little bewildered, and the unconscious throngs of ant-like human beings. Turning with terrified relief from this exhibition of diabolic impotence, the stranger finds a divine hand writing slowly across the opposite quarter of the heavens its igneous message of warning to the nations, "Wear —— Underwear for Youths and Men-Boys." And close by this message come forth a youth and a man-boy, flaming and immortal, clad in celestial underwear, box a short round, vanish, reappear for another round, and again disappear. Night after night they wage this combat. What gods they are who fight endlessly and indecisively over New York is not for our knowledge; whether it be Thor and Odin, or Zeus and Cronos, or Michael and Lucifer, or Ormuzd and Ahriman, or Good-as-a-means and Good-as-an-end. The ways of our lords were ever riddling and obscure. To the right a celestial bottle, stretching from the horizon to the zenith, appears, is uncorked, and scatters the worlds with the foam of what ambrosial liquor may

have been within. Beyond, a Spanish goddess, some minor deity in the Dionysian theogony, dances continually, rapt and mysterious, to the music of the spheres, her head in Cassiopeia and her twinkling feet among the Pleiades. And near her, Orion, archer no longer, releases himself from his strained posture to drive a sidereal golf-ball out of sight through the meadows of Paradise; then poses, addresses, and drives again.

"O Nineveh, are these thy gods,
Thine also, mighty Nineveh?"

Why this theophany, or how the gods have got out to perform their various 'stunts' on the *flammantia mœnia mundi*, is not asked by their incurious devotees. Through Broadway the dingily glittering tide spreads itself over the sands of 'amusement.' Theatres and 'movies' are aglare. Cars shriek down the street; the Elevated train clangs and curves perilously overhead; newsboys wail the baseball news; wits cry their obscure challenges to one another, 'I should worry!' or 'She's some Daisy!' or 'Good-night, Nurse!' In houses off the streets around children are being born, lovers are kissing, people are dying. Above, in the midst of

those coruscating divinities, sits one older and greater than any. Most colossal of all, it flashes momently out, a woman's head, all flame against the darkness. It is beautiful, passionless, in its simplicity and conventional representation queerly like an archaic Greek or early Egyptian figure. Queen of the night behind, and of the gods around, and of the city below—here, if at all, you think, may one find the answer to the riddle. Her ostensible message, burning in the firmament beside her, is that we should buy pepsin chewing-gum. But there is more, not to be given in words, ineffable. Suddenly, when she has surveyed mankind, she closes her left eye. Three times she winks, and then vanishes. No ordinary winks these, but portentous, terrifyingly steady, obliterating a great tract of the sky. Hour by hour she does this, night by night, year by year. That enigmatic obscuration of light, that answer that is no answer, is, perhaps, the first thing in this world that a child born near here will see, and the last that a dying man will have to take for a message to the curious dead. She is immortal. Men have worshipped her as Isis and as Ashtaroth, as Venus, as Cybele, Mother of the Gods, and as Mary. There is

a statue of her by the steps of the British Museum. Here, above the fantastic civilisation she observes, she has no name. She is older than the sky-scrapers amongst which she sits; and one, certainly, of her eyelids is a trifle weary. And the only answer to our cries, the only comment upon our cities, is that divine stare, the wink, once, twice, thrice. And then darkness.

IV

BOSTON AND HARVARD

It is right to leave Boston late in a summer afternoon, and by sea. Naval departure is always the better. A train snatches you, hot, dusty, and smoky, with an irritated hurry out of the back parts of a town. The last glimpse of a place you may have grown to like or love is, ignobly, interminable rows of the bedroom-windows in mean streets, a few hovels, some cinder-heaps, and a factory chimney. As like as not, you are reft from a last wave to the city's unresponsive and dingy back by the roar and suffocation of a tunnel. By sea one takes a gracefuller, more satisfactory farewell.

Boston puts on her best appearance to watch our boat go out for New York. The harbour was bright with sunlight and blue water and little white sails and there wasn't more than the faintest smell of tea. The city sat primly on her little hills, decorous, civilised, European-looking. It is homely after

New York. The Boston crowd is curiously English. They have nice eighteenth-century houses there, and ivy grows on the buildings. And they are hospitable. All Americans are hospitable; but they haven't *quite* time in New York to practise the art so perfectly as the Bostonians. It is a lovely art. . . . But Boston also makes you feel at home without meaning to. A delicious ancient Toryism is to be found here. "What is wrong with America," a middle-aged lady told me, "is this *Democracy*. They ought to take the votes away from these people, who don't know how to use them, and give them only to *us*, the Educated." My heart leapt the Atlantic, and was in a Cathedral or University town of South England.

Yet Boston is alive. It sits, in comfortable middle-age, on the ruins of its glory. But it is not buried beneath them. It used to lead America in Literature, Thought, Art, everything. The years have passed. It is remarkable how nearly now Boston is to New York what Munich is to Berlin. Boston and Munich were the leaders forty years ago. They can't quite make out that they aren't now. It is too incredible that Art should leave her goose-feather bed and away to the

wraggle-taggle business-men. And certainly, if Berlin and New York are more 'live,' Boston and Munich are more themselves, less feverishly imitations of Paris. But the undisputed palm is there no more; and its absence is felt.

But I had little time to taste Boston itself. I was lured across the river to a place called Cambridge, where is the University of Harvard. Harvard is the Oxford and Cambridge of America, they claim. She has moulded the nation's leaders and uttered its ideals. Harvard, Boston, New England, it is impossible to say how much they are interwoven, and how they have influenced America. I saw Harvard in 'Commencement,' which is Eights Week and May Week, the festive winding-up of the year, a time of parties and of valedictions. One of the great events of Commencement, and of the year, is the Harvard-Yale baseball match. To this I went, excited at the prospect of my first sight of a 'ball game,' and my mind vaguely reminiscent of the indolent, decorous, upper-class crowd, the sunlit spaces, the dignified ritual, and white-flannelled grace of Lord's at the 'Varsity cricket match. The crowd was gay, and not very large. We sat in wooden stands, which were placed in the

shape of a large V. As all the hitting which counts in baseball takes place well in front of the wicket, so to speak, the spectators have the game right under their noses; the striker stands in the angle of the V and plays outwards. The field was a vast place, partly stubbly grass, partly worn and patchy, like a parade-ground. Beyond it lay the river; beyond that the town of Cambridge and the University buildings. Around me were undergraduates, with their mothers and sisters. 'Cambridge'! . . . but there entered to us, across the field, a troop of several hundred men, all dressed in striped shirts of the same hue and pattern, and headed by a vast banner which informed the world that they were the graduates of 1910, celebrating their triennial. In military formation they moved across the plain towards us, led by a band, ceaselessly vociferating, and raising their straw hats in unison to mark the time. There followed the class of 1907, attired as sailors; 1903, the decennial class, with some samples of their male children marching with them, and a banner inscribed "515 Others. No Race Suicide"; 1898, carefully arranged in an H-shaped formation, dancing along to their music with a slow polka-step, each with his

hands on the shoulders of the man in front, and at the head of all their leader, dancing backwards in perfect time, marshalling them; 1888, middle-aged men, again with some children, and a Highland regiment playing the bagpipes.

When these had passed to the seats allotted for them, I had time to observe the players, who were practising about the ground, and I was shocked. They wear dust-coloured shirts and dingy knickerbockers, fastened under the knee, and heavy boots. They strike the English eye as being attired for football, or a gladiatorial combat, rather than a summer game. The very close-fitting caps, with large peaks, give them picturesquely the appearance of hooligans. Baseball is a good game to watch, and in outline easy to understand, as it is merely glorified rounders. A cricketer is fascinated by their rapidity and skill in catching and throwing. There is excitement in the game, but little beauty except in the long-limbed 'pitcher,' whose duty it is to hurl the ball rather further than the length of a cricket-pitch, as bewilderingly as possible. In his efforts to combine speed, mystery, and curve, he gets into attitudes of a very novel and fantastic, but quite obvious,

beauty. M. Nijinsky would find them repay study.

One queer feature of this sport is that unoccupied members of the batting side, fielders, and even spectators, are accustomed to join in vocally. You have the spectacle of the representatives of the universities endeavouring to frustrate or unnerve their opponents, at moments of excitement, by cries of derision and mockery, or heartening their own supporters and performers with exclamations of 'Now, Joe!' or 'He's got them!' or 'He's the boy!' At the crises in the fortunes of the game, the spectators take a collective and important part. The Athletic Committee appoints a 'cheer-leader' for the occasion. Every five or ten minutes this gentleman, a big, fine figure in white, springs out from his seat at the foot of the stands, addresses the multitude through a megaphone with a 'One! Two! Three!' hurls it aside, and, with a wild flinging and swinging of his body and arms, conducts ten thousand voices in the Harvard yell. That over, the game proceeds, and the cheer-leader sits quietly waiting for the next moment of peril or triumph. I shall not easily forget that figure, bright in the sunshine, conducting with his whole body,

passionate, possessed by a demon, bounding in the frenzy of his inspiration from side to side, contorted, rhythmic, ecstatic. It seemed so wonderfully American, in its combination of entire wildness and entire regulation, with the whole just a trifle fantastic. Completely friendly and befriended as I was, I couldn't help feeling at those moments very alien and very, very old—even more so than after the protracted game had ended in a victory for Harvard, when the dusty plain was filled with groups and lines of men dancing in solemn harmony, and a shouting crowd, broken by occasional individuals who could find some little eminence to lead a Harvard yell from, and who conducted the bystanders, and then vanished, and the crowd swirled on again.

Different enough was the scene next day, when all Harvard men who were up for Commencement assembled and, arranged by years, marched round the yard. Class by class they paraded, beginning with veterans of the 'fifties, down to the class of 1912. I wonder if English nerves could stand it. It seems to bring the passage of time so very presently and vividly to the mind. To see, with such emphatic regularity, one's coevals changing in figure, and diminishing in number, summer

after summer! . . . Perhaps it is nobler, this deliberate viewing of oneself as part of the stream. To the spectator, certainly, the flow and transiency become apparent and poignant. In five minutes fifty years of America, of so much of America, go past one. The shape of the bodies, apart from the effects of age, the lines of the faces, the ways of wearing hair and beard and moustaches, all these change a little decade by decade, before your eyes. And through the whole appearance runs some continuity, which is Harvard.

The orderly progression of the years was unbroken, except at one point. There was one gap, large and arresting. Though all years were represented, there seemed to be nobody in the procession between fifty and sixty. I asked a Harvard friend the reason. "The War," he said. He told me there had always been that gap. Those who were old enough to be conscious of the war had lost a big piece of their lives. With their successors a new America began. I don't know how true it is. Certainly, the dates worked out right. And I met an American on a boat who had been a child in one of the neutral States. He used to watch the regiments forming in the main street of his town, and marching out, some

north and some south. He said it felt as though pieces of his body were being torn in different directions. And he was only nine.

The procession filed in to an open court, to hear the speeches of the recipients of honorary degrees, and the President's annual statement. There was still, in every sense, a solemn atmosphere. The President's speech floated out into the great open space; fragments of it were blown to one's ears concerning deaths, and the spirit of the place, and a detailed account of the money given during the year. Eleven hundred thousand dollars in all—a record, or nearly a record. We roared applause. The American universities appear still to dream of the things of this world. They keep putting up the most wonderful and expensive buildings. But they do not pay their teachers well.

Yet Harvard is a spirit, a way of looking at things, austerely refined, gently moral, kindly. The perception of it grows on the foreigner. Its charm is so deliciously old in this land, so deliciously young compared with the lovely frowst of Oxford and Cambridge. You see it in temperament, the charm of simplicity and good-heartedness and culture; in the Harvard undergraduate, who is a boy, while his English contemporary is either a young man or a

schoolboy, less pleasant stages; and in the old Bostonian who heard, and still hears, the lectures of Dickens and Thackeray. Class Day brings so many of that older generation together. They reveal what Harvard, what Boston, was. There is something terrifying in the completeness of their lives and their civilisation. They are like a company of dons whose studies are of a remote and finished world. But the subject of their scholarship is the Victorian age, and especially Victorian England. Hence their liveliness and certainty, greater than men can reach who are concerned with the dubieties and changes of incomplete things. Hence the wit, the stock of excellent stories, the wrinkled wisdom and mirth of the type. They are the flower of a civilisation, its ripest critics, and final judges. Carlyle and Emerson are their greatest living heroes. One of them bent the kindliness and alert interest of his eighty years upon me. "So you come from Rugby," he said. "Tell me, do you know that curious creature, Matthew Arnold?" I couldn't bring myself to tell him that, even in Rugby, we had forgiven that brilliant youth his iconoclastic tendencies some time since, and that, as a matter of fact, he had died when I was eight months old.

V

MONTREAL AND OTTAWA

My American friends were full of kindly scorn when I announced that I was going to Canada. 'A country without a soul!' they cried, and pressed books upon me, to befriend me through that Philistine bleakness. Their commiseration unnerved me, but I was heartened by a feeling that I was, in a sense, going home, and by the romance of journeying. There was romance in the long grim American train, in the great lake we passed in the blackest of nights, and could just see glinting behind dark trees; in the negro car-attendant; in the boy who perpetually cried: 'Pea-nuts! Candy!' up and down the long carriages; in the lofty box they put me in to sleep; and in the fat old lady who had the berth under mine, and snored shrilly the whole night through. There was almost romance, even, in the fact that after all there was no restaurant-car on the train; and, having walked all day in the country, I dined off an orange.

I suppose an Englishman in another country, if he is simple enough, is continually and alternately struck by two thoughts: 'How like England this is!' and 'How unlike England this is!' When I had woken next morning, and, lying on my back, had got inside my clothes with a series of fish-like jumps, I found myself looking with startled eyes out of the window at the largest river I had ever seen. It was blue, and sunlit, and it curved spaciously. But beyond that we ran into the squalider parts of a city. It became immediately obvious that we were not in New York or Boston or any of the more orderly, the rather foreign, cities of America. There was something in the untidiness of those grimy houses, the smoky disorder of the backyards, that ran a thrill of nostalgia through me. I recognised the English way of doing things—with a difference that I could not define till later.

Determined to be in all ways the complete tourist, I took a rough preliminary survey of Montreal in an 'observation-car.' It was a large motor-wagonette, from which everything in Montreal could be seen in two hours. We were a most fortuitous band of twenty, who had elected so to see it. Our guide addressed us from the front through a small

megaphone, telling us what everything was, what we were to be interested in, what to overlook, what to admire. He seemed the exact type of a spiritual pastor and master, shepherding his stolid and perplexed flock on a regulated path through the dust and clatter of the world. And the great hollow device out of which our instruction proceeded was so perfectly a blind mouth. I had never understood *Lycidas* before. We were sheepish enough, and fairly hungry. However, we were excellently fed. "On the right, ladies and gentlemen, is the Bank of Montreal; on the left the Presbyterian Church of St Andrew's; on the right, again, the well-designed residence of Sir Blank Blank; further on, on the same side, the Art Museum. . . ." The outcome of it all was a vague general impression that Montreal consists of banks and churches. The people of this city spend much of their time in laying up their riches in this world or the next. Indeed, the British part of Montreal is dominated by the Scotch race; there is a Scotch spirit sensible in the whole place. The rather narrow, rather gloomy streets, the solid, square, grey, aggressively prosperous buildings, the general greyness of the city, the air of dour prosperity. Even the Canadian habit

of loading the streets with heavy telephone wires, supported by frequent black poles, seemed to increase the atmospheric resemblance to Glasgow.

But besides all this there is a kind of restraint in the air, due, perhaps, to a state of affairs which, more than any other, startles the ordinary ignorant English visitor. The average man in England has an idea of Canada as a young-eyed daughter State, composed of millions of wheat-growers and backwoodsmen of British race. It surprises him to learn that more than a quarter of the population is of French descent, that many of them cannot speak English, that they control a province, form the majority in the biggest city in Canada, and are a perpetual complication in the national politics. Even a stranger who knows this is startled at the complete separateness of the two races. Inter-marriage is very rare. They do not meet socially; only on business, and that not often. In the same city these two communities dwell side by side, with different traditions, different languages, different ideals, without sympathy or comprehension. The French in Canada are entirely devoted to—some say under the thumb of—the Roman Catholic Church. They

seem like a piece of the Middle Ages, dumped after a trans-secular journey into a quite uncompromising example of our commercial time. Some of their leaders are said to have dreams of a French Republic—or theocracy—on the banks of the St Lawrence. How this, or any other, solution of the problem is to come about, no man knows. Racial difficulties are the most enduring of all. The French and British in Canada seem to have behaved with quite extraordinary generosity and kindliness towards each other. No one is to blame. But it is not in human nature that two communities should live side by side, pretending they are one, without some irritation and mutual loss of strength. There is no open strife. But 'incidents,' and the memory of incidents, bear continual witness to the truth of the situation. And racial disagreement is at the bottom, often unconsciously, of many political and social movements. Sir Wilfrid Laurier performed a miracle. But no one of French birth will ever again be Premier of Canada.

Montreal and Eastern Canada suffer from that kind of ill-health which afflicts men who are cases of 'double personality'—debility and spiritual paralysis. The 'progressive'

British-Canadian man of commerce is comically desperate of peasants who *will not* understand that increase of imports and volume of trade and numbers of millionaires are the measures of a city's greatness; and to his eye the Roman Catholic Church, with her invaluable ally Ignorance, keeps up her incessant war against the general good of the community of which she is part. So things remain.

I made my investigations in Montreal. I have to report that the Discobolus[1] is very well, and, nowadays, looks the whole world in the face, almost quite unabashed. West of Montreal, the country seems to take on a rather more English appearance. There is still a French admixture. But the little houses are not purely Gallic, as they are along the Lower St Lawrence; and once or twice I detected real hedges.

Ottawa came as a relief after Montreal. There is no such sense of strain and tightness in the atmosphere. The British, if not greatly in the majority, are in the ascendency; also, the city seems conscious of other than financial standards, and quietly, with dignity, aware of her own purpose. The Canadians, like the Americans, chose to have for their capital a

[1] See Samuel Butler's poem, "Oh God! oh Montreal!"—Ed.

city which did not lead in population or in wealth. This is particularly fortunate in Canada, an extremely individualistic country, whose inhabitants are only just beginning to be faintly conscious of their nationality. Here, at least, Canada is more than the Canadian. A man desiring to praise Ottawa would begin to do so without statistics of wealth and the growth of population; and this can be said of no other city in Canada except Quebec. Not that there are not immense lumber-mills and the rest in Ottawa. But the Government farm, and the Parliament buildings, are more important. Also, although the 'spoils' system obtains a good deal in this country, the nucleus of the Civil Service is much the same as in England; so there is an atmosphere of Civil Servants about Ottawa, an atmosphere of safeness and honour and massive buildings and well-shaded walks. After all, there is in the qualities of Civility and Service much beauty, of a kind which would adorn Canada.

Parliament Buildings stand finely on a headland of cliff some 160 feet above the river. There are gardens about them; and beneath, the wooded rocks go steeply down to the water. It is a position of natural boldness and significance. The buildings were put up

in the middle of last century, an unfortunate period. But they have dignity, especially of line; and when evening hides their colour, and the western sky and the river take on the lovely hues of a Canadian sunset, and the lights begin to come out in the city, they seem to have the majesty and calm of a natural crown of the river-headland. The Government have bought the ground along the cliff for half a mile on either side, and propose to build all their offices there. So, in the end, if they build well, the river-front at Ottawa will be a noble sight. And—just to show that it is Canada, and not Utopia—the line of national buildings will always be broken by an expensive and superb hotel the Canadian Pacific Railway has been allowed to erect on the twin and neighbouring promontory to that of the Houses of Parliament.

The streets of Ottawa are very quiet, and shaded with trees. The houses are mostly of that cool, homely, wooden kind, with verandahs, on which, or on the steps, the whole family may sit in the evening and observe the passers-by. This is possible for both the rich and the poor, who live nearer each other in Ottawa than in most cities. In general there is an air of civilisation, which

extends even over the country round. But in the country you see little signs, a patch of swamp, or thickets of still untouched primæval wood, which remind you that Europeans have not long had this land. I was taken in a motor-car some twenty miles or more over the execrable roads round here, to a lovely little lake in the hills north-west of Ottawa. We went by little French villages and fields at first, and then through rocky, tangled woods of birch and poplar, rich with milk-weed and blue cornflowers, and the aromatic thimble-berry blossom, and that romantic, light, purple-red flower which is called fireweed, because it is the first vegetation to spring up in the prairie after a fire has passed over, and so might be adopted as the emblematic flower of a sense of humour. They told me, casually, that there was nothing but a few villages between me and the North Pole. It is probably true of several commonly frequented places in this country. But it gives a thrill to hear it.

But what Ottawa leaves in the mind is a certain graciousness—dim, for it expresses a barely materialised national spirit—and the sight of kindly English-looking faces, and the rather lovely sound of the soft Canadian accent in the streets.

VI

QUEBEC AND THE SAGUENAY

THE boat starts from Montreal one evening, and lands you in Quebec at six next morning. The evening I left was a dull one. Heavy sulphurous clouds hung low over the city, drifting very slowly and gloomily out across the river. Mount Royal crouched, black and sullen, in the background, its crest occluded by the darkness, appearing itself a cloud materialised, resting on earth. The harbour was filled with volumes of smoke, purple and black, wreathing and sidling eastwards, from steamers and chimneys. The gigantic elevators and other harbour buildings stood mistily in this inferno, their heads clear and sinister above the mirk. It was impossible to decide whether an enormous mass of pitchy and Tartarian gloom was being slowly moulded by diabolic invisible hands into a city, or a city, the desperate and damned abode of a loveless race, was disintegrating into its proper fume and dusty chaos. With relief we turned

outwards to the nobility of the St Lawrence and the gathering dark.

On the boat I fell in with another wanderer, an American Jew, and we joined our fortunes, rather loosely, for a few days. He was one of those men whom it is a life-long pleasure to remember. I can record his existence the more easily that there is not the slightest chance of him ever reading these lines. He was a fat, large man of forty-five, obviously in business and probably of a mediocre success. His eyes were light-coloured, very small, always watery, and perpetually roving. The lower part of his face was clean-shaven and very broad; his mouth wide, with thin, moist, colourless lips; his nose fat and Hebraic. He was rather bald. He had respect for Montreal, because, though closed to navigation for five months in the year, it is the second busiest port on the coast. He said it had Boston skinned. The French he disliked. He thought they stood in the way of Canada's progress. His mind was even more childlike and transparent than is usual with business men. The observer could see thoughts slowly floating into it, like carp in a pond. When they got near the surface, by a purely automatic process they found utterance. He was almost com-

pletely unconscious of an audience. Everything he thought of he said. He told me that his boots were giving in the sole, but would probably last this trip. He said he had not washed his feet for eight days; and that his clothes were shabby (which was true), but would do for Canada. It was interesting to see how Canada presented herself to that mind. He seemed to regard her as a kind of Bœotia, and terrifyingly dour. "These Canadian waiters," he said, "they jes' *fling* the food in y'r face. Kind'er gets yer sick, doesn't it?" I agreed. There was a Yorkshire mechanic, too, who had been in Canada four years, and preferred it to England, "because you've room to breathe," but also found that Canada had not yet learnt social comfort, and regretted the manners of "the Old Country."

We woke to find ourselves sweeping round a high cliff, at six in the morning, with a lively breeze, the river very blue and broken into ripples, and a lot of little white clouds in the sky. The air was full of gaiety and sunshine and the sense of the singing of birds, though actually, I think, there were only a few gulls crying. It was the perfection of a summer morning, thrilling with a freshness which, the

fancy said, was keener than any the old world knew. And high and grey and serene above the morning lay the citadel of Quebec. Is there any city in the world that stands so nobly as Quebec? The citadel crowns a headland, three hundred feet high, that juts boldly out into the St Lawrence. Up to it, up the side of the hill, clambers the city, houses and steeples and huts, piled one on the other. It has the individuality and the pride of a city where great things have happened, and over which many years have passed. Quebec is as refreshing and as definite after the other cities of this continent as an immortal among a crowd of stockbrokers. She has, indeed, the radiance and repose of an immortal; but she wears her immortality youthfully. When you get among the streets of Quebec, the mediæval, precipitous, narrow, winding, and perplexed streets, you begin to realise her charm. She almost incurs the charge of quaintness (abhorrent quality!); but even quaintness becomes attractive in this country. You are in a foreign land, for the people have an alien tongue, short stature, the quick, decided, cinematographic quality of movement, and the inexplicable cheerfulness which mark a foreigner. You might almost be in

Siena or some old German town, except that Quebec has her street-cars and grain-elevators to show that she is living.

The American Jew and I took a *calèche*, a little two-wheeled local carriage, driven by a lively Frenchman with a factitious passion for death-spots and churches. A small black and white spaniel followed the *calèche*, yapping. The American's face shone with interest. "That dawg's Michael," he said, "the hotel dawg. He's a queer little dawg. I kicked his face; and he tried to bite me. Hup, Michael!" And he laughed hoarsely. "Non!" said the driver suddenly, "it is not the 'otel dog." The American did not lose interest. "These little dawgs are all alike," he said. "Dare say if you kicked that dawg in the face, he'd bite you. Hup, Michael!" With that he fell into deep thought.

We rattled up and down the steep streets, out among tidy fields, and back into the noisily sedate city again. We saw where Wolfe fell, where Montcalm fell, where Montgomery fell. Children played where the tides of war had ebbed and flowed. Mr Norman Angell and his friends tell us that trade is superseding war; and pacifists declare that for the future countries will win their pride

or shame from commercial treaties and tariffs and bounties, and no more from battles and sieges. And there is a part of Canadian patriotism that has progressed this way. But I wonder if the hearts of that remarkable race, posterity, will ever beat the harder when they are told, "Here Mr Borden stood when he decided to double the duty on agricultural implements," or even "In this room Mr Ritchie conceived the plan of removing the shilling on wheat." When that happens, Quebec will be a forgotten ruin. . . . The reverie was broken by my friend struggling to his feet and standing, unsteady and bareheaded, in the swaying carriage. In that position he burst hoarsely into a song that I recognised as 'The Star-Spangled Banner.' We were passing the American Consulate. His song over, he settled down and fell into a deep sleep, and the *calèche* jolted down even narrower streets, curiously paved with planks, and ways that led through and under the ancient, tottering wooden houses.

But Quebec is too real a city to be 'seen' in such a manner. And a better way of spending a few days, or years, is to sit on Dufferin Terrace, with the old Lower Town sheer beneath you, and the river beyond it,

and the citadel to the right, a little above, and the Isle of Orleans and the French villages away down-stream to your left. Hour by hour the colours change, and sunlight follows shadow, and mist rises, and smoke drifts across. And through the veil of the shifting of lights and hues there remains visible the majesty of the most glorious river in the world.

From this contemplation, and from musing on men's agreement to mark by this one great sign of the Taking of the Heights of Quebec, the turning of one of the greatest currents in our history, I was torn by a journey I had been advised to make. The boat goes some hundred and thirty miles down the St Lawrence, turns up a northern tributary, the Saguenay, goes as far as Chicoutimi, ninety miles up, and returns to Quebec. Both on this trip, and between Quebec and Montreal, we touched at many little French villages, by day and by night. Their *habitants*, the French-Canadian peasants, are a jolly sight. They are like children in their noisy content. They are poor and happy, Roman Catholics; they laugh a great deal; and they continually sing. They do not progress at all. As a counter to these admirable people we had on our boat a great many priests. They diffused an atmosphere

of black, of unpleasant melancholy. Their face had that curiously unwashed look, and were for the most part of a mean and very untrustworthy expression. Their eyes were small, shifty, and cruel, and would not meet the gaze. . . . The choice between our own age and mediæval times is a very hard one.

It was almost full night when we left the twenty-mile width of the St Lawrence, and turned up a gloomy inlet. By reason of the night and of comparison with the river from which we had come, this stream appeared unnaturally narrow. Darkness hid all detail, and we were only aware of vast cliffs, sometimes dense with trees, sometimes bare faces of sullen rock. They shut us in, oppressively, but without heat. There are no banks to this river, for the most part; only these walls, rising sheer from the water to the height of two thousand feet, going down sheer beneath it, or rather by the side of it, to many times that depth. The water was of some colour blacker than black. Even by daylight it is inky and sinister. It flows without foam or ripple. No white showed in the wake of the boat. The ominous shores were without sign of life, save for a rare light every few miles, to mark some bend in the chasm. Once a

canoe with two Indians shot out of the shadows, passed under our stern, and vanished silently down-stream. We all became hushed and apprehensive. The night was gigantic and terrible. There were a few stars, but the flood slid along too swiftly to reflect them. The whole scene seemed some Stygian imagination of Dante. As we drew further and further into that lightless land, little twists and curls of vapour wriggled over the black river-surface. Our homeless, irrelevant, tiny steamer seemed to hang between two abysms. One became suddenly aware of the miles of dark water beneath. I found that under a prolonged gaze the face of the river began to writhe and eddy, as if from some horrible suppressed emotion. It seemed likely that something might appear. I reflected that if the river failed us, all hope was gone; and that anyhow this region was the abode of devils. I went to bed.

Next day we steamed down the river again. By daylight some of the horror goes, but the impression of ancientness and desolation remains. The gloomy flood is entirely shut in by the rock or the tangled pine and birch forests of these great cliffs, except in one or two places, where a chine and a beach have

given lodging to lonely villages. One of these is at the end of a long bay, called Ha-Ha Bay. The local guide-book, an early example of the school of fantastic realism so popular among our younger novelists, says that this name arose from the 'laughing ejaculations' of the early French explorers, who had mistaken this lengthy blind-alley for the main stream. 'Ha! Ha!' they said. So like an early explorer.

At the point where the Saguenay joins the St Lawrence, here twenty miles wide, I 'stopped off' for a day, to feel the country more deeply. The village is called Tadousac, and consists of an hotel and French fishermen, to whom Quebec is a distant, unvisited city of legend. The afternoon was very hot. I wandered out along a thin margin of yellow sand to the extreme rocky point where the waters of the two rivers meet and swirl. There I lay, and looked at the strange humps of the Laurentian hills, and the dark green masses of the woods, impenetrable depths of straight and leaning and horizontal trees, broken here and there by great bald granite rocks, and behind me the little village, where the earliest church in Canada stands. Away in the St Lawrence there would be a flash as an immense

white fish jumped. Miles out an occasional steamer passed, bound to England perhaps. And once, hugging the coast, came a half-breed paddling a canoe, with a small diamond-shaped sail, filled with trout. The cliff above me was crowned with beds of blue flowers, whose names I did not know. Against the little gulfs and coasts of rock at my feet were washing a few white logs of driftwood. I wondered if they could have floated across from England, or if they could be from the *Titanic*. The sun was very hot, the sky a clear light blue, almost cloudless, like an English sky, and the water seemed fairly deep. I stripped, hovered a while on the brink, and plunged. The current was unexpectedly strong. I seemed to feel that two-mile-deep body of black water moving against me. And it was cold as death. Stray shreds of the St Lawrence water were warm and cheerful. But the current of the Saguenay, on such a day, seemed unnaturally icy. As my head came up I made one dash for the land, scrambled out on the hot rocks, and lay there panting. Then I dried on a handkerchief, dressed, and ran back home, still shivering, through the woods to the hotel.

VII

ONTARIO

THE great joy of travelling in Canada is to do it by water. The advantage of this is that you can keep fairly clean and quiet of nerves; the disadvantage is that you don't 'see the country.' I travelled most of the way from Ottawa to Toronto by water. But between Ottawa and Prescott then, and later from Toronto to Niagara Falls, and thence to Sarnia, there is a good deal of Southern Ontario to be seen—the part which has counted as Ontario so far. And I saw it through a faint grey-pink mist of *Heimweh*. For after the States and after Quebec it is English. There are weather-beaten farm-houses, rolling country, thickets of trees, little hills green and grey in the distance, decorous small fields, orchards, and, I swear, a hedge or two. Most of the towns we went through are a little too vivacious or too pert to be European. But there seemed to be real villages occasionally, and the land had a quiet air of occupation.

Men have lived contentedly on this land and died where they were born, and so given it a certain sanctity. Away north the wild begins, and is only now being brought into civilisation, inhabited, made productive, explored, and exploited. But this country has seen the generations pass, and won something of that repose and security which countries acquire from the sight.

The wise traveller from Ottawa to Toronto catches a boat at Prescott, and puffs judicially between two nations up the St Lawrence and across Lake Ontario. We were a cosmopolitan, middle-class bunch (it is the one distinction between the Canadian and American languages that Canadians tend to say 'bunch' but Americans 'crowd'), out to enjoy the scenery. For this stretch of the river is notoriously picturesque, containing the Thousand Isles. The Thousand Isles vary from six inches to hundreds of yards in diameter. Each, if big enough, has been bought by a rich man—generally an American—who has built a castle on it. So the whole isn't much more beautiful than Golder's Green. We picked our way carefully between the islands. The Americans on board sat in rows saying "That house was built by Mr ——. Made his money in biscuits.

Cost three hundred thousand dollars, e-recting that building. Yessir." The Canadians sat looking out the other way, and said, "In nineteen-ten this land was worth twenty thousand an acre; now it's worth forty-five thousand. Next year . . ." and their eyes grew solemn as the eyes of men who think deep and holy thoughts. But the English sat quite still, looking straight in front of them, thinking of nothing at all, and hoping that nobody would speak to them. So we fared; until, well on in the afternoon, we came to the entrance of Lake Ontario.

There is something ominous and unnatural about these great lakes. The sweet flow of a river, and the unfriendly restless vitality of the sea, men may know and love. And the little lakes we have in Europe are but as fresh-water streams that have married and settled down, alive and healthy and comprehensible. Rivers (except the Saguenay) are human. The sea, very properly, will not be allowed in heaven. It has no soul. It is unvintageable, cruel, treacherous, what you will. But, in the end—while we have it with us—it is all right; even though that all-rightness result but, as with France, from the recognition of an age-long feud and an irre-

mediable lack of sympathy. But these monstrous lakes, which ape the ocean, are not proper to fresh water or salt. They have souls, perceptibly, and wicked ones.

We steamed out, that day, over a flat, stationary mass of water, smooth with the smoothness of metal or polished stone or one's finger-nail. There was a slight haze everywhere. The lake was a terrible dead-silver colour, the gleam of its surface shot with flecks of blue and a vapoury enamel-green. It was like a gigantic silver shield. Its glint was inexplicably sinister and dead, like the glint on glasses worn by a blind man. In front the steely mist hid the horizon, so that the occasional rock or little island and the one ship in sight seemed hung in air. They were reflected to a preternatural length in the glassy floor. Our boat appeared to leave no wake; those strange waters closed up foamlessly behind her. But our black smoke hung, away back on the trail, in a thick, clearly-bounded cloud, becalmed in the hot, windless air, very close over the water, like an evil soul after death that cannot win dissolution. Behind us and to the right lay the low, woody shores of Southern Ontario and Prince Edward Peninsula, long dark lines of green, stretching

thinner and thinner, interminably, into the distance. The lake around us was dull, though the sun shone full on it. It gleamed, but without radiance.

Toronto (pronounce *T'ranto*, please) is difficult to describe. It has an individuality, but an elusive one; yet not through any queerness or difficult shade of eccentricity; a subtly normal, an indefinably obvious personality. It is a healthy, cheerful city (by modern standards); a clean-shaven, pink-faced, respectably dressed, fairly energetic, unintellectual, passably sociable, well-to-do, public-school-and-'varsity sort of city. One knows in one's own life certain bright and pleasant figures; people who occupy the nearer middle distance, unobtrusive but not negligible; wardens of the marches between acquaintanceship and friendship. It is always nice to meet them, and in parting one looks back at them once. They are, healthily and simply, the most fitting product of a not perfect environment; good-sorts; normal, but not too normal; distinctly themselves, but not distinguished. They support civilisation. You can trust them in anything, if your demand be for nothing extremely intelligent or absurdly altruistic. One of these could be exhibited

in any gallery in the universe, 'Perfect Specimen; Upper Middle Classes; Twentieth Century'—and we should not be ashamed. They are not vexed by impossible dreams, nor outrageously materialists, nor perplexed by overmuch prosperity, nor spoilt by reverse. Souls for whom the wind is always nor'-nor'-west, and they sail nearer success than failure, and nearer wisdom than lunacy. Neither leaders nor slaves—but no Tomlinsons! —whomsoever of your friends you miss, *them* you will certainly meet again, not unduly pardoned, the fifty-first by the Throne.

Such is Toronto. A brisk city of getting on for half a million inhabitants, the largest British city in Canada (in spite of the cheery Italian faces that pop up at you out of excavations in the street), liberally endowed with millionaires, not lacking its due share of destitution, misery, and slums. It is no mushroom city of the West, it has its history; but at the same time it has grown immensely of recent years. It is situated on the shores of a lovely lake; but you never see that, because the railways have occupied the entire lake front. So if, at evening, you try to find your way to the edge of the water, you are checked by a region of smoke, sheds, trucks, wharves, store-

houses, 'depôts,' railway-lines, signals, and locomotives and trains that wander on the tracks up and down and across streets, pushing their way through the pedestrians, and tolling, as they go, in the American fashion, an immense melancholy bell, intent, apparently, on some private and incommunicable grief. Higher up are the business quarters, a few sky-scrapers in the American style without the modern American beauty, but one of which advertises itself as the highest in the British Empire; streets that seem less narrow than Montreal, but not unrespectably wide; "the buildings are generally substantial and often handsome" (the too kindly Herr Baedeker). Beyond that the residential part, with quiet streets, gardens open to the road, shady verandahs, and homes, generally of wood, that are a deal more pleasant to see than the houses in a modern English town.

Toronto is the centre and heart of the Province of Ontario; and Ontario, with a third of the whole population of Canada, directs the country for the present, conditioned by the French on one hand and the West on the other. And in this land, that is as yet hardly at all conscious of itself as a nation, Toronto and Ontario do their best in leading and realis-

ing national sentiment. A Toronto man, like most Canadians, dislikes an Englishman; but, unlike some Canadians, he detests an American. And he has some inkling of the conditions and responsibilities of the British Empire. The tradition is in him. His father fought to keep Canada British.

It is never easy to pick out of the turmoil of an election the real powers that have moved men; and it is especially difficult in a country where politics are so corrupt as they are in Canada. But certainly this British feeling helped to throw Ontario, and so the country, against Reciprocity with the United States in 1911; and it is keeping it, in the comedy of the Navy Question, on Mr Borden's side—rather from distrust of his opponent's sincerity, perhaps, than from admiration of the fix he is in. It has been used, this patriotism, to aid the wealthy interests, which are all-powerful here; and it will continue to be a ball in the tennis of party politics. But it is real; it will remain, potential of good, among all the forces that are certain for evil.

Toronto, soul of Canada, is wealthy, busy, commercial, Scotch, absorbent of whisky; but she is duly aware of other things. She has a most modern and efficient interest in educa-

tion; and here are gathered what faint, faint beginnings or premonitions of such things as Art Canada can boast (except the French-Canadians, who, it is complained, produce disproportionately much literature, and waste their time on their own unprofitable songs). Most of those few who have begun to paint the landscape of Canada centre there, and a handful of people who know about books. In these things, as in all, this city is properly and cheerfully to the front. It can scarcely be doubted that the first Repertory Theatre in Canada will be founded in Toronto, some thirty years hence, and will very daringly perform *Candida* and *The Silver Box*. Canada is a live country, live, but not, like the States, kicking. In these trifles of Art and 'culture,' indeed, she is much handicapped by the proximity of the States. For her poets and writers are apt to be drawn thither, for the better companionship there and the higher rates of pay.

But Toronto—Toronto is the subject. One must say something—*what* must one say about Toronto? What can one? What has anybody ever said? It is impossible to give it anything but commendation. It is not squalid like Birmingham, or cramped like Canton,

or scattered like Edmonton, or sham like Berlin, or hellish like New York, or tiresome like Nice. It is all right. The only depressing thing is that it will always be what it is, only larger, and that no Canadian city can ever be anything better or different. If they are good they may become Toronto.

VIII

NIAGARA FALLS

SAMUEL BUTLER has a lot to answer for. But for him, a modern traveller could spend his time peacefully admiring the scenery instead of feeling himself bound to dog the simple and grotesque of the world for the sake of their too-human comments. It is his fault if a peasant's *naïveté* has come to outweigh the beauty of rivers, and the remarks of clergymen are more than mountains. It is very restful to give up all effort at observing human nature and drawing social and political deductions from trifles, and to let oneself relapse into wide-mouthed worship of the wonders of nature. And this is very easy at Niagara. Niagara means nothing. It is not leading anywhere. It does not result from anything. It throws no light on the effects of Protection, nor on the Facility for Divorce in America, nor on Corruption in Public Life, nor on Canadian character, nor even on the Navy Bill. It is merely a great deal of water falling

over some cliffs. But it is very remarkably that. The human race, apt as a child to destroy what it admires, has done its best to surround the Falls with every distraction, incongruity, and vulgarity. Hotels, power-houses, bridges, trams, picture post-cards, sham legends, stalls, booths, rifle-galleries, and side-shows frame them about. And there are Touts. Niagara is the central home and breeding-place for all the touts of earth. There are touts insinuating, and touts raucous, greasy touts, brazen touts, and upper-class, refined, gentlemanly, take-you-by-the-arm touts; touts who intimidate and touts who wheedle; professionals, amateurs, and *dilettanti*, male and female; touts who would photograph you with your arm round a young lady against a faked background of the sublimest cataract, touts who would bully you into cars, char-à-bancs, elevators, or tunnels, or deceive you into a carriage and pair, touts who would sell you picture post-cards, moccasins, sham Indian beadwork, blankets, tee-pees, and crockery, and touts, finally, who have no apparent object in the world, but just purely, simply, merely, incessantly, indefatigably, and ineffugibly to tout. And in the midst of all this, over-

whelming it all, are the Falls. He who sees them instantly forgets humanity. They are not very high, but they are overpowering. They are divided by an island into two parts, the Canadian and the American.

Half a mile or so above the Falls, on either side, the water of the great stream begins to run more swiftly and in confusion. It descends with ever-growing speed. It begins chattering and leaping, breaking into a thousand ripples, throwing up joyful fingers of spray. Sometimes it is divided by islands and rocks, sometimes the eye can see nothing but a waste of laughing, springing, foamy waves, turning, crossing, even seeming to stand for an instant erect, but always borne impetuously forward like a crowd of triumphant feasters. Sit close down by it, and you see a fragment of the torrent against the sky, mottled, steely, and foaming, leaping onward in far-flung criss-cross strands of water. Perpetually the eye is on the point of descrying a pattern in this weaving, and perpetually it is cheated by change. In one place part of the flood plunges over a ledge a few feet high and a quarter of a mile or so long, in a uniform and stable curve. It gives an impression of almost military con-

certed movement, grown suddenly out of confusion. But it is swiftly lost again in the multitudinous tossing merriment. Here and there a rock close to the surface is marked by a white wave that faces backwards and seems to be rushing madly up-stream, but is really stationary in the headlong charge. But for these signs of reluctance, the waters seem to fling themselves on with some foreknowledge of their fate, in an ever wilder frenzy. But it is no Maeterlinckian prescience. They prove, rather, that Greek belief that the great crashes are preceded by a louder merriment and a wilder gaiety. Leaping in the sunlight, careless, entwining, clamorously joyful, the waves riot on towards the verge.

But there they change. As they turn to the sheer descent, the white and blue and slate colour, in the heart of the Canadian Falls at least, blend and deepen to a rich, wonderful, luminous green. On the edge of disaster the river seems to gather herself, to pause, to lift a head noble in ruin, and then, with a slow grandeur, to plunge into the eternal thunder and white chaos below. Where the stream runs shallower it is a kind of violet colour, but both violet and green

fray and frill to white as they fall. The mass of water, striking some ever-hidden base of rock, leaps up the whole two hundred feet again in pinnacles and domes of spray. The spray falls back into the lower river once more; all but a little that fines to foam and white mist, which drifts in layers along the air, graining it, and wanders out on the wind over the trees and gardens and houses, and so vanishes.

The manager of one of the great power-stations on the banks of the river above the Falls told me that the centre of the river-bed at the Canadian Falls is deep and of a saucer shape. So it may be possible to fill this up to a uniform depth, and divert a lot of water for the power-houses. And this, he said, would supply the need for more power, which will certainly soon arise, without taking away from the beauty of Niagara. This is a handsome concession of the utilitarians to ordinary sight-seers. Yet, I doubt if we shall be satisfied. The real secret of the beauty and terror of the Falls is not their height or width, but the feeling of colossal power and of unintelligible disaster caused by the plunge of that vast body of water. If that were taken away, there would

be little visible change, but the heart would be gone.

The American Falls do not inspire this feeling in the same way as the Canadian. It is because they are less in volume, and because the water does not fall so much into one place. By comparison their beauty is almost delicate and fragile. They are extraordinarily level, one long curtain of lacework and woven foam. Seen from opposite, when the sun is on them, they are blindingly white, and the clouds of spray show dark against them. With both Falls the colour of the water is the ever-altering wonder. Greens and blues, purples and whites, melt into one another, fade, and come again, and change with the changing sun. Sometimes they are as richly diaphanous as a precious stone, and glow from within with a deep, inexplicable light. Sometimes the white intricacies of dropping foam become opaque and creamy. And always there are the rainbows. If you come suddenly upon the Falls from above, a great double rainbow, very vivid, spanning the extent of spray from top to bottom, is the first thing you see. If you wander along the cliff opposite, a bow springs into being in the American Falls, accompanies you

courteously on your walk, dwindles and dies as the mist ends, and awakens again as you reach the Canadian tumult. And the bold traveller who attempts the trip under the American Falls sees, when he dare open his eyes to anything, tiny baby rainbows, some four or five yards in span, leaping from rock to rock among the foam, and gambolling beside him, barely out of hand's reach, as he goes. One I saw in that place was a complete circle, such as I have never seen before, and so near that I could put my foot on it. It is a terrifying journey, beneath and behind the Falls. The senses are battered and bewildered by the thunder of the water and the assault of wind and spray; or rather, the sound is not of falling water, but merely of falling; a noise of unspecified ruin. So, if you are close behind the endless clamour, the sight cannot recognise liquid in the masses that hurl past. You are dimly and pitifully aware that sheets of light and darkness are falling in great curves in front of you. Dull omnipresent foam washes the face. Farther away, in the roar and hissing, clouds of spray seem literally to slide down some invisible plane of air.

Beyond the foot of the Falls the river is

like a slipping floor of marble, green with veins of dirty white, made by the scum that was foam. It slides very quietly and slowly down for a mile or two, sullenly exhausted. Then it turns to a dull sage green, and hurries more swiftly, smooth and ominous. As the walls of the ravine close in, trouble stirs, and the waters boil and eddy. These are the lower rapids, a sight more terrifying than the Falls, because less intelligible. Close in its bands of rock the river surges tumultuously forward, writhing and leaping as if inspired by a demon. It is pressed by the straits into a visibly convex form. Great planes of water slide past. Sometimes it is thrown up into a pinnacle of foam higher than a house, or leaps with incredible speed from the crest of one vast wave to another, along the shining curve between, like the spring of a wild beast. Its motion continually suggests muscular action. The power manifest in these rapids moves one with a different sense of awe and terror from that of the Falls. Here the inhuman life and strength are spontaneous, active, almost resolute; masculine vigour compared with the passive gigantic power, female, helpless and overwhelming, of the Falls. A place of fear.

One is drawn back, strangely, to a contemplation of the Falls, at every hour, and especially by night, when the cloud of spray becomes an immense visible ghost, straining and wavering high above the river, white and pathetic and translucent. The Victorian lies very close below the surface in every man. There one can sit and let great cloudy thoughts of destiny and the passage of empires drift through the mind; for such dreams are at home by Niagara. I could not get out of my mind the thought of a friend, who said that the rainbows over the Falls were like the arts and beauty and goodness, with regard to the stream of life—caused by it, thrown upon its spray, but unable to stay or direct or affect it, and ceasing when it ceased. In all comparisons that rise in the heart, the river, with its multitudinous waves and its single current, likens itself to a life, whether of an individual or of a community. A man's life is of many flashing moments, and yet one stream; a nation's flows through all its citizens, and yet is more than they. In such places, one is aware, with an almost insupportable and yet comforting certitude, that both men and nations are hurried onwards to their ruin or ending as inevitably as this

dark flood. Some go down to it unreluctant, and meet it, like the river, not without nobility. And as incessant, as inevitable, and as unavailing as the spray that hangs over the Falls, is the white cloud of human crying. . . . With some such thoughts does the platitudinous heart win from the confusion and thunder of a Niagara peace that the quietest plains or most stable hills can never give.

IX

TO WINNIPEG

THE boats that run from Sarnia the whole length of Lake Huron and Lake Superior are not comfortable. But no doubt a train for those six hundred miles would be worse. You start one afternoon, and in the morning of the next day you have done with the rather colourless, unindividual expanses of Huron, and are dawdling along a canal that joins the lakes, by the little town of Sault Ste Marie (pronounced, abruptly, 'Soo'). We happened on it one Sunday. The nearer waters of the river and the lakes were covered with little sailing or rowing or bathing parties. Everybody seemed cheerful, merry, and mildly raucous. There is a fine, breezy, enviable healthiness about Canadian life. Except in some Eastern cities, there are few clerks or working-men but can get away to the woods and water.

As we drew out into the cold magnificence of Lake Superior, the receding woody shores

were occasionally spotted with picnickers or campers, who rushed down the beach in various deshabille, waving towels, handkerchiefs, or garments. We were as friendly. The human race seemed a jolly bunch, and the world a fine, pleasant, open-air affair—'some world,' in fact. A man in a red shirt and a bronzed girl with flowing hair slid past in a canoe. We whistled, sang, and cried 'Snooky-ookums!' and other words of occult meaning, which imputed love to them, and foolishness. They replied suitably, grinned, and were gone. A little old lady in black, in the chair next mine, kept a small telescope glued to her eye, hour after hour. Whenever she distinguished life on any shore we passed, she waved a tiny handkerchief. Diligently she did this, and with grave face, never visible to the objects of her devotion, I suppose, but certainly very happy; the most persistent lover of humanity I have ever seen. . . .

In the afternoon we were beyond sight of land. The world grew a little chilly; and over the opaque, hueless water came sliding a queer, pale mist. We strained through it for hours, a low bank of cloud, not twenty feet in height, on which one could look down from the higher deck. Its upper surface was

quite flat and smooth, save for innumerable tiny molehills or pyramids of mist. We seemed to be ploughing aimlessly through the phantasmal sand-dunes of another world, faintly and by an accident apprehended. So may the shades on a ghostly liner, plunging down Lethe, have an hour's chance glimpse of the lights and lives of Piccadilly, to them uncertain and filmy mirages of the air.

To taste the full deliciousness of travelling in an American train by night through new scenery, you must carefully secure a lower berth. And when you are secret and separate in your little oblong world, safe between sheets, pull up the blinds on the great window a few inches and leave them so. Thus, as you lie, you can view the dark procession of woods and hills, and mingle the broken hours of railway slumber with glimpses of a wild starlit landscape. The country retains individuality, and yet puts on romance, especially the rough, shaggy region between Port Arthur and Winnipeg. For four hundred miles there is hardly a sign that humanity exists on the earth's face, only rocks and endless woods of scrubby pine, and the occasional strange gleam of water, and night and the wind. Night-long, dream and reality

mingle. You may wake from sleep to find yourself flying through a region where a forest fire has passed, a place of grey pine-trunks, stripped of foliage, occasionally waving a naked bough. They appear stricken by calamity, intolerably bare and lonely, gaunt, perpetually protesting, amazed and tragic creatures. We saw no actual fire the night I passed. But a little while after dawn we noticed on the horizon, fifteen miles away, an immense column of smoke. There was little wind, and it hung, as if sculptured, against the grey of the morning; nor did we lose sight of it till just before we boomed over a wide, swift, muddy river, into the flat city of Winnipeg.

Winnipeg is the West. It is important and obvious that in Canada there are two or three (some say five) distinct Canadas. Even if you lump the French and English together as one community in the East, there remains the gulf of the Great Lakes. The difference between East and West is possibly no greater than that between North and South England, or Bavaria and Prussia; but in this country, yet unconscious of itself, there is so much less to hold them together. The character of the land and the people differs; their interests,

as it appears to them, are not the same. Winnipeg is a new city. In the archives at Ottawa is a picture of Winnipeg in 1870—Mainstreet, with a few shacks, and the prairie either end. Now her population is a hundred thousand, and she has the biggest this, that, and the other west of Toronto. A new city; a little more American than the other Canadian cities, but not unpleasantly so. The streets are wider, and full of a bustle which keeps clear of hustle. The people have something of the free swing of Americans, without the bumptiousness; a tempered democracy, a mitigated independence of bearing. The manners of Winnipeg, of the West, impress the stranger as better than those of the East, more friendly, more hearty, more certain to achieve graciousness, if not grace. There is, even, in the architecture of Winnipeg, a sort of *gauche* pride visible. It is hideous, of course, even more hideous than Toronto or Montreal; but cheerily and windily so. There is no scheme in the city, and no beauty, but it is at least preferable to Birmingham, less dingy, less directly depressing. It has no real slums, even though there is poverty and destitution.

But there seems to be a trifle more public

spirit in the West than the East. Perhaps it is that in the greater eagerness and confidence of this newer country men have a superfluity of energy and interest, even after attending to their own affairs, to give to the community. Perhaps it is that the West is so young that one has a suspicion money-making has still some element of a child's game in it—its only excuse. At any rate, whether because the state of affairs is yet unsettled, or because of the invisible subtle spirit of optimism that blows through the heavily clustering telephone-wires and past the neat little modern villas and down the solidly pretentious streets, one can't help finding a tiny hope that Winnipeg, the city of buildings and the city of human beings, may yet come to something. It is a slender hope, not to be compared to that of the true Winnipeg man, who, gazing on his city, is fired with the proud and secret ambition that it will soon be twice as big, and after that four times, and then ten times . . .

"Wider still and wider
Shall thy bounds be set,"

says that hymn which is the noblest expression of modern ambition. *That* hope is sure to be fulfilled. But the other timid prayer, that something different, something more worth

having, may come out of Winnipeg, exists, and not quite unreasonably. That cannot be said of Toronto.

Winnipeg is of the West, new, vigorous in its way, of unknown potentialities. Already the West has been a nuisance to the East, in the fight of 1911 over Reciprocity with the United States. When she gets a larger representation in Parliament, she will be still more of a nuisance. A casual traveller cannot venture to investigate the beliefs and opinions of the inhabitants of a country, but he can record them all the better, perhaps, for his foreign-ness. It is generally believed in the West that the East runs Canada, and runs it for its own advantage. And the East means a very few rich men; who control the big railways, the banks, and the Manufacturers' Association, subscribe to both political parties, and are generally credited with complete control over the Tariff and most other Canadian affairs. Whether or no the Manufacturers' Association does arrange the Tariff and control the commerce of Canada, it is generally believed to do so. The only thing is that its friends say that it acts in the best interests of Canada, its enemies that it acts in the best interests of the Manufacturers' Association. Among its

enemies are many in the West. The normal Western life is a lonely and individual one; and a large part of the population has crossed from the United States, or belongs to that great mass of European immigration that Canada is letting so blindly in. So, naturally, the Westerner does not feel the same affection for the Empire or for England as the British Canadians of the East, whose forefathers fought to stay within the Empire. Nor is his affection increased by the suspicion that the Imperial cry has been used for party purposes. He has no use for politics at Ottawa. The naval question is nothing to him. He wants neither to subscribe money nor to build ships. Europe is very far away; and he is too ignorant to realise his close connection with her. He has strong views, however, on a Tariff which only affects him by perpetually raising the cost of living and farming. The ideas of even a Conservative in the West about reducing the Tariff would make an Eastern 'Liberal' die of heart-failure. And the Westerner also hates the Banks. The banking system of Canada is peculiar, and throws the control of the banks into the hands of a few people in the East, who were felt, by the ever optimistic West, to have shut down credit

too completely during the recent money stringency.

The most interesting expression of the new Western point of view, and in many ways the most hopeful movement in Canada, is the Co-operative movement among the grain-growers of the three prairie provinces. Only started a few years ago, it has grown rapidly in numbers, wealth, power, and extent of operations. So far it has confined itself politically to influencing provincial legislatures. But it has gradually attached itself to an advanced Radical programme of a Chartist description. And it is becoming powerful. Whether the outcome will be a very desirable rejuvenation of the Liberal Party, or the creation of a third—perhaps Radical Labour party, it is hard to tell. At any rate, the change will come. And, just to start with, there will very shortly come to the Eastern Powers, who threw out Reciprocity with the States for the sake of the Empire, a demand from the West that the preference to British goods be increased rapidly till they be allowed to come in free, also for the Empire's sake. Then the fun will begin.

X

OUTSIDE

I HAD visited New York, Boston, Quebec, Montreal, and Toronto. In Winnipeg I found a friend, who was tired of cities. So was I. In Canada the remedy lies close at hand. We took ancient clothes—and I, Ben Jonson and Jane Austen to keep me English—and departed northward for a lodge, reported to exist in a region of lakes and hills and forests and caribou and Indians and a few people. At first the train sauntered through a smiling plain, intermittently cultivated, and dotted with little new villages. Over this country are thrown little pools of that flood of European immigration that pours through Winnipeg, to remain separate or be absorbed, as destiny wills. The problem of immigration here reveals that purposelessness that exists in the affairs of Canada even more than those of other nations. The multitude from South or East Europe flocks in. Some make money and return. The most remain, often in in-

assimilable lumps. There is every sign that these lumps may poison the health of Canada as dangerously as they have that of the United States. For Canada there is the peril of too large an element of foreign blood and traditions in a small nation already little more than half composed of British blood and descent. Nationalities seem to teach one another only their worst. If the Italians gave the Canadians of their good manners, and the Doukhobors or Poles inoculated them with idealism and the love of beauty, and received from them British romanticism and sense of responsibility! . . . . But they only seem to increase the anarchy, these 'foreigners,' and to learn the American twang and method of spitting. And there is the peril of politics. Upon these scattered exotic communities, ignorant of the problems of their adopted land, ignorant even of its language, swoop the agents of political parties, with their one effectual argument—bad whisky. This baptism is the immigrants' only organised welcome into their new liberties. Occasionally some Church raises a thin protest. But the 'Anglo-Saxon' continues to take up his burden; and the floods from Europe pour in. Canadians regard this influx with that queer

fatalism which men adopt under plutocracy. "How could they stop it? It pays the steamship and railway companies. It may, or may not, be good for Canada. Who knows? In any case, it will go on. Our masters wish it. . . ."

It is noteworthy that Icelanders are found to be far the readiest to mingle and become Canadian. After them, Norwegians and Swedes. With other immigrant nationalities, hope lies with the younger generation; but these acclimatise immediately.

Our train was boarded by a crowd of Ruthenians or Galicians, brown-eyed and beautiful people, not yet wholly civilised out of their own costume. The girls chatted together in a swift, lovely language, and the children danced about, tossing their queer brown mops of hair. They clattered out at a little village that seemed to belong to them, and stood waving and laughing us out of sight. I pondered on their feelings, and looked for the name of the little Utopia these aliens had found in a new world. It was called (for the railway companies name towns in this country) 'Milner.'

We wandered into rougher country, where the rocks begin to show through the surface,

and scrub pine abounds. At the end of our side-line was another, and at the end of that a village, the ultimate outpost of civilisation. Here, on the way back, some weeks later, we had to spend the night in a little hotel which 'accommodated transients.' It was a rough affair of planks, inhabited by whatever wandering workman from construction-camps or other labour in the region wanted shelter for the night. You slept in a sort of dormitory, each bed partitioned off from the rest by walls that were some feet short of the ceiling. Swedes, Germans, Welsh, Italians, and Poles occupied the other partitions, each blaspheming the works of the Lord in his own tongue. About midnight two pairs of feet crashed into the cell opposite mine; and a high, sleepless voice, with an accent I knew, continued an interminable argument on theology. "I' beginning wash word," it proclaimed with all the melancholy of drunkenness. The other disputant was German or Norwegian, and uninterested, though very kindly. "Right-o!" he said. "Let's go sleep!"

"*What* word?" pondered the Englishman. The Norwegian suggested several, sleepily. "Logos," wailed the other, "*What* Logos?" and wept. They persisted, hour by hour,

disconnected voices in the void and darkness, lonely and chance companions in the back-blocks of Canada, the one who couldn't, and the one who didn't want to, understand. A little before dawn I woke again. That thin voice, in patient soliloquy, was discussing Female Suffrage, going very far down into the roots of the matter. I met its owner next morning. He was tall and dark and lachrymose, with bloodshot eyes, and breath that stank of gin. He had played scrum-half for —— College in '98; and had prepared for ordination. "You'll understand, old man," he said, "how out of place I am amongst this scum—*οἱ πολλοί*—we're not of the *οἱ πολλοί*, are we?" It seemed nicer to agree. "Oh, I know Greek!"—he was too eagerly the gentleman—"*ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας*—the last thing I learnt for ordination—this world of injustice—that's right, isn't it?" He laughed sickly. "I say as one 'Varsity man to another—we're not *οἱ πολλοί*—could you lend me some money?"

We had to press on thirty miles up a 'light railway' to a power-station, a settlement by a waterfall in the wild. An engine and an ancient luggage-van conveyed us. The van held us, three crates, and some sacks, four

half-breeds in black slouch hats, who curled up on the floor like dogs and slept, and an aged Italian. This last knew no word of English. He had travelled all the way from Naples, Heaven knows how, to find his two sons, supposed to be working in the power-station. So much was written on a piece of paper. We gave him chocolate, and at intervals I repeated to him my only Italian, the first line of the *Divina Commedia*. He seemed cheered. The van jolted on through the fading light. Once a man stepped out on to the track, stopped us, and clambered silently up. We went on. It was the doctor, who had been visiting some lonely hut in the woods. Later, another figure was seen staggering between the rails. We slowed up, shouted, and finally stopped, butting him gently on the back with our buffers, and causing him to fall. He was very drunk. The driver and the doctor helped him into the van. There he stood, and looking round, said very distinctly, "I do not wish to travel on your —— —— train." So we put him off again, and proceeded. Such is the West.

We rattled interminably through the darkness. The unpeopled woods closed about us, snatched with lean branches, and opened out

again to a windy space. Once or twice the ground fell away, and there was, for a moment, the mysterious gleam and stir of water. Canadian stars are remote and virginal. Everyone slumbered. Arrival at the great concrete building and the little shacks of the power-station shook us to our feet. The Italian vanished into the darkness. Whether he found his sons or fell into the river no one knew, and no one seemed to care.

An Indian, taciturn and Mongolian, led us on next day, by boat and on foot, to the lonely log-house we aimed at. It stood on high rocks, above a lake six miles by two. There was an Indian somewhere, by a river three miles west, and a trapper to the east, and a family encamped on an island in the lake. Else nobody.

It is that feeling of fresh loneliness that impresses itself before any detail of the wild. The soul—or the personality—seems to have indefinite room to expand. There is no one else within reach, there never has been anyone; no one else is *thinking* of the lakes and hills you see before you. They have no tradition, no names even; they are only pools of water and lumps of earth, some day, perhaps to be clothed with loves and memories

and the comings and goings of men, but now dumbly waiting their Wordsworth or their Acropolis to give them individuality, and a soul. In such country as this there is rarefied clean sweetness. The air is unbreathed, and the earth untrodden. All things share this childlike loveliness, the grey whispering reeds, the pure blue of the sky, the birches and thin fir-trees that make up these forests, even the brisk touch of the clear water as you dive.

That last sensation, indeed, and none of sight or hearing, has impressed itself as the token of Canada, the land. Every swimmer knows it. It is not languorous, like bathing in a warm Southern sea; nor grateful, like a river in a hot climate; nor strange, as the ocean always is; nor startling, like very cold water. But it touches the body continually with freshness, and it seems to be charged with a subtle and unexhausted energy. It is colourless, faintly stinging, hard and grey, like the rocks around, full of vitality, and sweet. It has the tint and sensation of a pale dawn before the sun is up. Such is the wild of Canada. It awaits the sun, the end for which Heaven made it, the blessing of civilisation. Some day it will be sold in large portions, and the timber given to a friend of ——'s,

and cut down and made into paper, on which shall be printed the praise of prosperity; and the land itself shall be divided into town-lots and sold, and sub-divided and sold again, and boomed and resold, and boosted and distributed to fishy young men who will vend it in distant parts of the country; and then such portions as can never be built upon shall be given in exchange for great sums of money to old ladies in the quieter parts of England, but the central parts of towns shall remain in the hands of the wise. And on these shall churches, hotels, and a great many ugly sky-scrapers be built, and hovels for the poor, and houses for the rich, none beautiful, and there shall ugly objects be manufactured, rather hurriedly, and sold to the people at more than they are worth, because similar and cheaper objects made in other countries are kept out by a tariff. . . .

But at present there are only the wrinkled, grey-blue lake, sliding ever sideways, and the grey rocks, and the cliffs and hills, covered with birch-trees, and the fresh wind among the birches, and quiet, and that unseizable virginity. Dawn is always a lost pearly glow in the ashen skies, and sunset a multitude of softly-tinted mists sliding before a remotely golden West.

They follow one another with an infinite loneliness. And there is a far and solitary beach of dark, golden sand, close by a deserted Indian camp, where, if you drift quietly round the corner in a canoe, you may see a bear stumbling along, or a great caribou, or a little red deer coming down to the water to drink, treading the wild edge of lake and forest with a light, secret, and melancholy grace.

XI

THE PRAIRIES

I PASSED the last few hours of the westward journey from Winnipeg to Regina in daylight, the daylight of a wet and cheerless Sunday. The car was half-empty, in possession of a family of small children and some theatrical ladies and gentlemen from the United States, travelling on 'one night stands,' who were collectively called 'The World-Renowned Barbary Pirates.' We jogged limply from little village to little village, each composed of little brown log-shacks, with a few buildings of tin and corrugated iron, and even of brick, and several grain-elevators. Each village—I beg your pardon, 'town'—seems to be exactly like the next. They differ a little in size, from populations of 100 to nearly 2000, and in age, for some have buildings dating almost back to the nineteenth century, and a few are still mostly tents. They seemed all to be emptied of their folk this Sabbath morn; though whether the inhabitants were at work,

or in church, or had shot themselves from depression induced by the weather, it was impossible to tell. These little towns do not look to the passer-by comfortable as homes. Partly, there is the diffieulty of distinguishing your village from the others. It would be as bad as being married to a Jap. And then towns should be on hills or in valleys, however small. A town dumped down, apparently by chance, on a flat expanse wears the same air of discomfort as a man trying to make his bed on a level, unyielding surface such as a lawn or pavement. He feels hopelessly incidental to the superficies of the earth. He is aware that the human race has thigh-bones. . . .

Yet this country is not quite flat, as I had been led to expect. It does not give you that feeling of a plain you have in parts of Lombardy and Holland and Belgium. This may have been due to the grey mist and drizzle which curtained off the horizon. But the land was always very slightly rolling, and sometimes almost as uneven as a Surrey common. At first it seemed to be given to mixed farming a good deal; afterwards to wheat, oats, and barley. But a great part is uncultivated prairie-land, grass, with sparse bushes and patches of brushwood and a few

rare trees, and continual clumps of large golden daisies. Occasional rough black roads wind through the brush and into the towns, and die into grass tracks along the wire fences. The day I went through, the interminable, oblique, thin rain took the gold out of the wheat and the brown from the distant fields and bushes, and drabbed all the colours in the grass. The children in the car cried to each other with the shrill, sick persistency of tired childhood, "How many inches to Regina?" "A Billion." "A Trillion." "A Shillion." The Barbary Pirates laughed incessantly. It seemed to me that the prairie would be a lonely place to live in, especially if it rained. But the people who have lived there for years tell me they get very homesick if they go away for a time. Valleys and hills seem to them petty, fretful, unlovable. The magic of the plains has them in thrall.

Certainly there is a little more democracy in the west of Canada than the east; the communities seem a little less incapable of looking after themselves. Out in the west they are erecting not despicable public buildings, founding universities, running a few public services. That 'politics' has a voice

in these undertakings does not make them valueless. There are perceptible in the prairies, among all the corruption, irresponsibility, and disastrous individualism, some faint signs of the sense of the community. Take a very good test, the public libraries. As you traverse Canada from east to west they steadily improve. You begin in the city of Montreal, which is unable to support one, and pass through the dingy rooms and inadequate intellectual provision of Toronto and Winnipeg. After that the libraries and reading-rooms, small for the smaller cities, are cleaner and better kept, show signs of care and intelligence; until at last, in Calgary, you find a very neat and carefully kept building, stocked with an immense variety of periodicals, and an admirably chosen store of books, ranging from the classics to the most utterly modern literature. Few large English towns could show anything as good. Cross the Rockies to Vancouver, and you're back among dirty walls, grubby furniture, and inadequate literature again. There's nothing in Canada to compare with the magnificent libraries little New Zealand can show. But Calgary is hopeful.

These cities grow in population with unimaginable velocity. From thirty to thirty

thousand in fifteen years is the usual rate. Pavements are laid down, stores and bigger stores and still bigger stores spring up. Trams buzz along the streets towards the unregarded horizon that lies across the end of most roads in these flat, geometrically planned, prairie-towns. Probably a Chinese quarter appears, and the beginnings of slums. Expensive and pleasant small dwelling-houses fringe the outskirts; and rents being so high, great edifices of residential flats rival the great stores. In other streets, or even sandwiched between the finer buildings, are dingy and decaying saloons, and innumerable little booths and hovels where adventurers deal dishonestly in Real Estate, and Employment Bureaux. And there are the vast erections of the great corporations, Hudson's Bay Company, and the banks and the railways, and, sometimes almost equally impressive, the public buildings. There are the beginnings of very costly universities; and Regina has built a superb great House of Parliament, with a wide sheet of water in front of it, a noble building.

The inhabitants of these cities are proud of them, and envious of each other with a bitter rivalry. They do not love their cities as a Manchester man loves Manchester or a

Münchener Munich, for they have probably lately arrived in them, and will surely pass on soon. But while they are there they love them, and with no silent love. They boost. To boost is to commend outrageously. And each cries up his own city, both from pride, it would appear, and for profit. For the fortunes of Newville are very really the fortunes of its inhabitants. From the successful speculator, owner of whole blocks, to the waiter bringing you a Martini, who has paid up a fraction of the cost of a quarter-share in a town-lot—all are the richer, as well as the prouder, if Newville grows. It is imperative to praise Edmonton in Edmonton. But it is sudden death to praise it in Calgary. The partisans of each city proclaim its superiority to all the others in swiftness of growth, future population, size of buildings, price of land—by all recognised standards of excellence. I travelled from Edmonton to Calgary in the company of a citizen of Edmonton and a citizen of Calgary. Hour after hour they disputed. Land in Calgary had risen from five dollars to three hundred; but in Edmonton from three to five hundred. Edmonton had grown from thirty persons to forty thousand in twenty years; but Calgary

from twenty to thirty thousand in twelve. . . . "Where"—as a respite—"did I come from?" I had to tell them, not without shame, that my own town of Grantchester, having numbered three hundred at the time of Julius Cæsar's landing, had risen rapidly to nearly four by Doomsday Book, but was now declined to three-fifty. They seemed perplexed and angry.

Sentimental people in the East will talk of the romance of the West, and of these simple, brave pioneers who have wrung a living from the soil, and are properly proud of the rude little towns that mark their conquest over nature. That may apply to the frontiers of civilisation up North, but the prairie-towns have progressed beyond all that. A few of the old pioneers of the West survive to watch with startled eyes the wonderful fruits of the seed they sowed. Such are among the finest people in Canada, very different from the younger generation, with wider interests, good talkers, the best of company. From them, and from records, one can learn of the early settlers and the beginnings of the North-West Mounted Police. The police seem to have been superb. For no great reward, but the love of the thing, they imposed order and

fairness upon half a continent. The Indians trusted them utterly; they were without fear. A store stands now in Calgary where forty years ago a policeman was shot to death by a murderer, followed over a thousand miles. He knew that the criminal would shoot; but it was the rule of the Mounted Police not to fire first. Wounded, he killed his man, then died. And there was the case of the desperado who crossed the border, and was eventually captured and held by an immense force of American police and military. They awaited a regiment of the Police to conduct the villain back to trial. Two appeared, and being asked, "Where is the escort?" replied, "We are the escort," and started back their five hundred miles ride with the murderer in tow. And there were the two who pursued a horse-thief from Dawson down to Minneapolis, caught him, and took him back to Dawson to be hanged. And there was the settler, who . . .

The tragedy of the West is that these men have passed, and that what they lived and died to secure for their race is now the foundation for a gigantic national gambling of a most unprofitable and disastrous kind. Hordes of people—who mostly seem to come from the great neighbouring Commonwealth, and are

inspired with the national hunger for getting rich quickly without deserving it—prey on the community by their dealings in what is humorously called 'Real Estate.' For them our fathers died. What a sowing, and what a harvest! And where good men worked or perished is now a row of little shops, all devoted to the sale of town-lots in some distant spot that must infallibly become a great city in the next two years, and in the doorway of each lounges a thin-chested, much-spitting youth, with a flabby face, shifty eyes, and an inhuman mouth, who invites you continually, with the most raucous of American accents, to "step inside and examine our Praposition."

XII

THE INDIANS

WHEN I was in the East, I got to know a man who had spent many years of his life living among the Indians. He showed me his photographs. He explained one, of an old woman. He said, "They told me there was an old woman in the camp called Laughing Earth. When I heard the name, I just said, 'Take me to her!' She wouldn't be photographed. She kept turning her back to me. I just picked up a clod and plugged it at her, and said, 'Turn round, Laughing Earth!' She turned half round, and grinned. She *was* a game old bird! I joshed all the boys here Laughing Earth was my girl—till they saw her photo!"

There stands Laughing Earth, in brightly-coloured petticoat and blouse, her grey hair blowing about her. Her back is towards you, but her face is turned, and scarcely hidden by a hand that is raised with all the coyness of seventy years. Laughter shines from the

infinitely lined, round, brown cheeks, and from the mouth, and from the dancing eyes, and floods and spills over from each of the innumerable wrinkles. Laughing Earth—there is endless vitality in that laughter. The hand and face and the old body laugh. No skinny, intellectual mirth, affecting but the lips! It was the merriment of an apple bobbing on the bough, or a brown stream running over rocks, or any other gay creature of earth. And with all was a great dignity, invulnerable to clods, and a kindly and noble beauty. By the light of that laughter much becomes clear—the right place of man upon earth, the entire suitability in life of very brightly-coloured petticoats, and the fact that old age is only a different kind of a merriment from youth, and a wiser.

And by that light the fragments of this pathetic race become more comprehensible, and, perhaps, less pathetic. The wanderer in Canada sees them from time to time, the more the further west he goes, irrelevant and inscrutable figures. In the east, French and Scotch half-breeds frequent the borders of civilisation. In any western town you may chance on a brave and his wife and a baby, resplendent in gay blankets and trappings,

sliding gravely through the hideousness of the new order that has supplanted them. And there will be a few half-breeds loitering at the corners of the streets. These people of mixed race generally seem unfortunate in the first generation. A few of the older ones, the 'old-timers,' have 'made good,' and hold positions in the society for which they pioneered. But most appear to inherit the weaknesses of both sides. Drink does its work. And the nobler ones, like the tragic figure of that poetess who died recently, Pauline Johnson, seem fated to be at odds with the world. The happiest, whether Indian or half-breed, are those who live beyond the ever-advancing edges of cultivation and order, and force a livelihood from nature by hunting and fishing. Go anywhere into the wild, and you will find in little clearings, by lake or river, a dilapidated hut with a family of these solitaries, friendly with the pioneers or trappers around, ready to act as guide on hunt or trail. The Government, extraordinarily painstaking and well-intentioned, has established Indian schools, and trains some of them to take their places in the civilisation we have built. Not the best Indians these, say lovers of the race. I have met them, as clerks or

stenographers, only distinguishable from their neighbours by a darker skin and a sweeter voice and manner. And in a generation or two, I suppose, the strain mingles and is lost. So we finish with kindness what our fathers began with war.

The Government, and others, have scientifically studied the history and characteristics of the Indians, and written them down in books, lest it be forgotten that human beings could be so extraordinary. They were a wandering race, it appears, of many tribes and, even, languages. Not apt to arts or crafts, they had, and have, an unrefined delight in bright colours. They enjoyed a 'Nature-Worship,' believed rather dimly in a presiding Power, and very definitely in certain ethical and moral rules. One of their incomprehensible customs was that at certain intervals the tribe divided itself into two factitious divisions, each headed by various chiefs, and gambled furiously for many days, one party against the other. They were pugnacious, and in their uncivilised way fought frequent wars. They were remarkably loyal to each other, and treacherous to the foe; brave, and very stoical. "Monogamy was very prevalent." It is remarked

that husbands and wives were very fond of each other, and the great body of scientific opinion favours the theory that mothers were much attached to their children. Most tribes were very healthy, and some fine-looking. Such were the remarkable people who hunted, fought, feasted, and lived here until the light came, and all was changed. Other qualities they had even more remarkable to a European, such as utter honesty, and complete devotion to the truth among themselves. Civilisation, disease, alcohol, and vice have reduced them to a few scattered communities and some stragglers, and a legend, the admiration of boyhood. Boys they were, pugnacious, hunters, loyal, and cruel, older than the merrier children of the South Seas, younger and simpler than the weedy, furtive, acquisitive youth who may figure our age and type. "We must be a Morally Higher race than the Indians," said an earnest American businessman to me in Saskatoon, "because we have Survived them. The Great Darwin has proved it." I visited, later, a community of our Moral Inferiors, an Indian 'reservation' under the shade of the Rockies. The Government has put aside various tracts of land where the Indians may conduct

their lives in something of their old way, and stationed in each an agent to protect their interests. For every white man, as an agent told me, "thinks an Indian legitimate prey for all forms of cheating and robbery."

The reservations are the better in proportion as they are further from the towns and cities. The one I saw was peopled by a few hundred Stonies, one of the finest and most untouched of the tribes. Of these Laughing Earth had made one, but alas! a few years before she had become

> "a portion of the mirthfulness
> That once she made more mirthful."

The Indians occupy themselves with a little farming and hunting, and with expeditions, and live in two or three small scattered villages of huts and tents. But the centre of the community is the little white-washed house where the agent has his office. Here we sat, he and I, and talked, behind the counter. The agent is father, mother, clergyman, tutor, physician, solicitor, and banker to the Indians. They wandered in and out of the place with their various requests. The most part of them could not talk English, but there was

generally some young Indian to interpret. An old chief entered. His grey hair curled down to his broad shoulders. He had a noble forehead, brown, steady eyes, a thin, humorous mouth. His cow had been run over by the C.P.R. What was to be done? and how much would he get? The affair was discussed through an interpreter, a Canadianised young Indian in trousers, who spat. Some of the men, especially the older ones, have wonderful dignity and beauty of face and body. Their physique is superb; their features shaped and lined by weather and experience into a Roman nobility that demands respect. Several such passed through. Then came an old woman, wizened and loquacious, bent double by the sack of her weekly provision of meat and flour. She required oil, was given it, secreted it in some cranny of the many-coloured bundle that she was, and staggered creakily off again.

The office emptied for a while. Then drifted in a younger man, tall, with that brown, dog-like expression of simplicity many Indians wear. He was covered by a large grey-coloured blanket, over his other clothes. He puffed at a pipe and stared out of the window. The agent and I continued talking.

You must never hurry an Indian. Presently he gave a little grunt. The agent said, "Well, John?" John went on smoking. Five minutes later, in the middle of our conversation, John said suddenly, "Salt." He was staring inexpressively at the ceiling. "Why, John," said the agent, "I gave you enough salts on Thursday to last you a week." John directed his gaze on us, and smoked dumbly. "Still the stomach?" inquired the agent, genially. John's expression became gradually grimmer, and he moved one hand slowly across till it rested on his stomach. An impassive, significant hand. After a courteous pause the agent rose, poured some Epsom salts out of a large jar, wrapped them in paper, and handed them over. John secreted them dispassionately in some pouch among the skins and blankets that wrapped him in. We went back to our conversation. Five minutes after he grunted, suddenly. Again five minutes, and he departed. His wife—a plump, patient young woman—and his solemn-eyed, fat, ridiculous son of four, were sitting stolidly on the grass outside. It obviously made no difference if he took one hour or seven over his business. They mounted their tiny ponies and trotted briskly off. . . .

I suppose one is apt to be sentimental about these good people. They're really so picturesque; they trail clouds of Fenimore Cooper; and they seem, for all their unfitness, reposefully more in touch with permanent things than the America that has succeeded them. And it is interesting to watch our pathetic efforts to prevent or disarm the effects of ourselves. What will happen? Shall we preserve these few bands of them, untouched, to succeed us, ultimately, when the grasp of our 'civilisation' weakens, and our transient anarchy in these wilder lands recedes once more before the older anarchy of Nature? Or will they be entirely swallowed by that ugliness of shops and trousers with which we enchain the earth, and become a memory and less than a memory? They are that already. The Indians have passed. They left no arts, no tradition, no buildings or roads or laws; only a story or two, and a few names, strange and beautiful. The ghosts of the old chiefs must surely chuckle when they note that the name by which Canada has called her capital and the centre of her political life, Ottawa, is an Indian name which signifies 'buying and selling.' And the wanderer in this land will always

be remarking an unexplained fragrance about the place-names, as from some flower which has withered, and which he does not know.

XIII

THE ROCKIES

At Calgary, if you can spare a minute from more important matters, slip beyond the hurrying white city, climb the golf links, and gaze west. A low bank of dark clouds disturbs you by the fixity of its outline. It is the Rockies, seventy miles away. On a good day, it is said, they are visible twice as far, so clear and serene is this air. Five hundred miles west is the coast of British Columbia, a region with a different climate, different country, and different problems. It is cut off from the prairies by vast tracts of wild country and uninhabitable ranges. For nearly two hundred miles the train pants through the homeless grandeur of the Rockies and the Selkirks. Four or five hotels, a few huts or tents, and a rare mining-camp—that is all the habitation in many thousands of square miles. Little even of that is visible from the train. That is one of the chief differences between the effect of the Rockies and

that of the Alps. There, you are always in sight of a civilisation which has nestled for ages at the feet of those high places. They stand, enrobed with worship, and grander by contrast with the lives of men. These unmemoried heights are inhuman—or rather, irrelevant to humanity. No recorded Hannibal has struggled across them; their shadow lies on no remembered literature. They acknowledge claims neither of the soul nor of the body of man. He is a stranger, neither Nature's enemy nor her child. She is there alone, scarcely a unity in the heaped confusion of these crags, almost without grandeur among the chaos of earth.

Yet this horrid and solitary wildness is but one aspect. There is beauty here, at length, for the first time in Canada, the real beauty that is always too sudden for mortal eyes, and brings pain with its comfort. The Rockies have a remoter, yet a kindlier, beauty than the Alps. Their rock is of a browner colour, and such rugged peaks and crowns as do not attain snow continually suggest gigantic castellations, or the ramparts of Titans. Eastward, the foothills are few and low, and the mountains stand superbly. The heart lifts to see them. They guard the sunset. Into

this rocky wilderness you plunge, and toil through it hour by hour, viewing it from the rear of the Observation-Car. The Observation-Car is a great invention of the new world. At the end of the train is a compartment with large windows, and a little platform behind it, roofed over, but exposed otherwise to the air. On this platform are sixteen little perches, for which you fight with Americans. Victorious, you crouch on one, and watch the ever-receding panorama behind the train. It is an admirable way of viewing scenery. But a day of being perpetually drawn backwards at a great pace through some of the grandest mountains in the world has a queer effect. Like life, it leaves you with a dizzy irritation. For, as in life, you never see the glories till they are past, and then they vanish with incredible rapidity. And if you crane to see the dwindling further peaks, you miss the new splendours.

The day I went through most of the Rockies was, by some standards, a bad one for the view. Rain scudded by in forlorn, grey showers, and the upper parts of the mountains were wrapped in cloud, which was but rarely blown aside to reveal the heights. Sublimity, therefore, was left to the imagination; but

desolation was most vividly present. In no weather could the impression of loneliness be stronger. The pines drooped and sobbed. Cascades, born somewhere in the dun firmament above, dropped down the mountain sides in ever-growing white threads. The rivers roared and plunged with aimless passion down the ravines. Stray little clouds, left behind when the wrack lifted a little, ran bleating up and down the forlorn hill-sides. More often, the clouds trailed along the valleys, a long procession of shrouded, melancholy figures, seeming to pause, as with an indeterminate, tragic, vain gesture, before passing out of sight up some ravine.

Yet desolation is not the final impression that will remain of the Rockies and the Selkirks. I was advised by various people to 'stop off' at Banff and at Lake Louise, in the Rockies. I did so. They are supposed to be equally the beauty spots of the mountains. How perplexing it is that advisers are always so kindly and willing to help, and always so undiscriminating. It is equally disastrous to be a sceptic and to be credulous. Banff is an ordinary little tourist resort in mountainous country, with hills and a stream and snow-peaks beyond. Beautiful enough, and in-

vigorating. But Lake Louise—Lake Louise is of another world. Imagine a little round lake 6000 feet up, a mile across, closed in by great cliffs of brown rock, round the shoulders of which are thrown mantles of close dark pine. At one end the lake is fed by a vast glacier, and its milky tumbling stream; and the glacier climbs to snowfields of one of the highest and loveliest peaks in the Rockies, which keeps perpetual guard over the scene. To this place you go up three or four miles from the railway. There is the hotel at one end of the lake, facing the glacier; else no sign of humanity. From the windows you may watch the water and the peaks all day, and never see the same view twice. In the lake, ever-changing, is Beauty herself, as nearly visible to mortal eyes as she may ever be. The water, beyond the flowers, is green, always a different green. Sometimes it is tranquil, glassy, shot with blue, of a peacock tint. Then a little wind awakes in the distance, and ruffles the surface, yard by yard, covering it with a myriad tiny wrinkles, till half the lake is milky emerald, while the rest still sleeps. And, at length, the whole is astir, and the sun catches it, and Lake Louise is a web of laughter, the opal distillation of all

the buds of all the spring. On either side go up the dark processional pines, mounting to the sacred peaks, devout, kneeling, motionless, in an ecstasy of homely adoration, like the donors and their families in a Flemish picture. Among these you may wander for hours by little rambling paths, over white and red and golden flowers, and, continually, you spy little lakes, hidden away, each a shy, soft jewel of a new strange tint of green or blue, mutable and lovely. . . . And beyond all is the glacier and the vast fields and peaks of eternal snow.

If you watch the great white cliff, from the foot of which the glacier flows—seven miles away, but it seems two—you will sometimes see a little puff of silvery smoke go up, thin, and vanish. A few seconds later comes the roar of terrific, distant thunder. The mountains tower and smile unregarding in the sun. It was an avalanche. And if you climb any of the ridges or peaks around, there are discovered other valleys and heights and ranges, wild and desert, stretching endlessly away. As day draws to an end the shadows on the snow turn bluer, the crying of innumerable waters hushes, and the immense, bare ramparts of westward-facing rock that guard the great

valley win a rich, golden-brown radiance. Long after the sun has set they seem to give forth the splendour of the day, and the tranquillity of their centuries, in undiminished fulness. They have that other-worldly serenity which a perfect old age possesses. And as with a perfect old age, so here, the colour and the light ebb so gradually out of things that you could swear nothing of the radiance and glory gone up to the very moment before the dark.

It was on such a height, and at some such hour as this, that I sat and considered the nature of the country in this continent. There was perceptible, even here, though less urgent than elsewhere, the strangeness I had noticed in woods by the St Lawrence, and on the banks of the Delaware (where are red-haired girls who sing at dawn), and in British Columbia, and afterwards among the brown hills and colossal trees of California, but especially by that lonely golden beach in Manitoba, where the high-stepping little brown deer run down to drink, and the wild geese through the evening go flying and crying. It is an empty land. To love the country here—mountains are worshipped, not loved—is like embracing a wraith. A European can find nothing to

satisfy the hunger of his heart. The air is too thin to breathe. He requires haunted woods, and the friendly presence of ghosts. The immaterial soil of England is heavy and fertile with the decaying stuff of past seasons and generations. Here is the floor of a new wood, yet uncumbered by one year's autumn fall. We Europeans find the Orient stale and get too luxuriantly fetid by reason of the multitude of bygone lives and thoughts, oppressive with the crowded presence of the dead, both men and gods. So, I imagine, a Canadian would feel our woods and fields heavy with the past and the invisible, and suffer claustrophobia in an English countryside beneath the dreadful pressure of immortals. For his own forests and wild places are windswept and empty. That is their charm, and their terror. You may lie awake all night and never feel the passing of evil presences, nor hear printless feet; neither do you lapse into slumber with the comfortable consciousness of those friendly watchers who sit invisibly by a lonely sleeper under an English sky. Even an Irishman would not see a row of little men with green caps lepping along beneath the fire-weed and the golden daisies; nor have the subtler fairies of England found

these wilds. It has never paid a steamship or railway company to arrange for their emigration.

In the bush of certain islands of the South Seas you may hear a crashing on windless noons, and, looking up, see a corpse swinging along head downwards at a great speed from tree to tree, holding by its toes, grimacing, dripping with decay. Americans, so active in this life, rest quiet afterwards. And though every stone of Wall Street have its separate Lar, their kind have not gone out beyond city-lots. The maple and the birch conceal no dryads, and Pan has never been heard amongst these reed-beds. Look as long as you like upon a cataract of the New World, you shall not see a white arm in the foam. A godless place. And the dead do not return. That is why there is nothing lurking in the heart of the shadows, and no human mystery in the colours, and neither the same joy nor the kind of peace in dawn and sunset that older lands know. It is, indeed, a new world. How far away seem those grassy, moonlit places in England that have been Roman camps or roads, where there is always serenity, and the spirit of a purpose at rest, and the sunlight flashes upon more than flint! Here

one is perpetually a first-comer. The land is virginal, the wind cleaner than elsewhere, and every lake new-born, and each day is the first day. The flowers are less conscious than English flowers, the breezes have nothing to remember, and everything to promise. There walk, as yet, no ghosts of lovers in Canadian lanes. This is the essence of the grey freshness and brisk melancholy of this land. And for all the charm of those qualities, it is also the secret of a European's discontent. For it is possible, at a pinch, to do without gods. But one misses the dead.

XIV

SOME NIGGERS

"Look at those niggers! Whose are they?" (*An American Suffragist lady on board s.s. 'Ventura,' entering Pago-Pago Harbour, Samoa, October* 1913. *Apropos of the Samoans.*)

I SUPPOSE that if news came that the National Gallery was burnt down, one might feel, while hearing of the general damage, the rooms gutted or untouched, the Rembrandts and Titians saved, harmed, or lost, a sudden disproportionately keen little stab of wonder: "The Pisanello *St George*," or "The Patinir *Flight into Egypt*"—"What's happened to *that*?" So now there must be a handful of wanderers here and there who, among all the major conflagration and disasters of nations and continents, have felt the tug of the question, "What of Samoa?"

The South Sea Islands have an invincible glamour. Any bar in 'Frisco or Sydney will give you tales of seamen who slipped ashore in Samoa or Tahiti or the Marquesas for a month's holiday, five, ten, or twenty years ago.

Their wives and families await them yet. They are compound, these islands, of all legendary heavens. They are Calypso's and Prospero's isle, and the Hesperides, and Paradise, and every timeless and untroubled spot. Such tales have been made of them by men who have been there, and gone away, and have been haunted by the smell of the bush and the lagoons, and faint thunder on the distant reef, and the colours of sky and sea and coral, and the beauty and grace of the islanders. And the queer thing is that it's all, almost tiresomely, true. In the South Seas the Creator seems to have laid Himself out to show what He *can* do. Imagine an island with the most perfect climate in the world, tropical, yet almost always cooled by a breeze from the sea. No malaria or other fevers. No dangerous beasts, snakes, or insects. Fish for the catching, and fruits for the plucking. And an earth and sky and sea of immortal loveliness. What more could civilisation give? Umbrellas? Rope? Gladstone bags? . . . Any one of the vast leaves of the banana is more waterproof than the most expensive woven stuff. And from the first tree you can tear off a long strip of fibre that holds better than any rope. And thirty

seconds' work on a great palm leaf produces a basket-bag which will carry incredible weights all day, and can be thrown away in the evening. A world of conveniences. And the things which civilisation has left behind or missed by the way are there, too, among the Polynesians: beauty and courtesy and mirth. I think there is no gift of mind or body that the wise value which these people lack. A man I met in some other islands, who had travelled much all over the world, said to me, "I have found no man, in or out of Europe, with the good manners and dignity of the Samoan, with the possible exception of the Irish peasant." A people among whom an Italian would be uncouth, and a high-caste Hindu vulgar, and Karsavina would seem clumsy, and Helen of Troy a frump.

The white population of Heaven, as one would expect, is very small; but, as one wouldn't expect, it is composed of Americans, English, and Germans. About half Germans, for it has been a German colony for some fourteen years. But it is one of the few white 'possessions,' I suppose, where a decent white needn't feel ashamed of himself. For, though it's proper to deny that Germans can colonise, they have certainly ruled Samoa very well.

In some part, no doubt, the luck has been with them—with the world—in this success. Samoa was one of their later and wiser attempts in colonising. The first governor was Herr Solf, the present Secretary for the Colonies, who is reputed to have started the administration of Samoa after a careful examination of our method of ruling Fiji, and with a due, but not complete, regard for the advice of the chief English and American settlers in Samoa. Certainly he started it very ably and wisely. By luck and good management those various forces which might destroy the beauty of Samoa are almost ineffectual. The fact that the missionaries are nearly all English puts a slight sufficient chasm between the spiritual and civil powers, and avoids that worst peril of these places—hierocracy. The trade of the islands is largely a monopoly of the 'German firm,' a big affair which pays a few people in Hamburg fabulous percentages. So smaller traders aren't encouraged to flourish unduly; and the German firm itself is too well fed to bother about extending. The Samoans, therefore, aren't exploited, spiritually or commercially, as much as they might be. By such slight chances beauty keeps a foothold in the world. The missionary's peace of mind

may require that the Samoan should wear trousers, or the trader's pocket that he should drink gin and live under corrugated iron. But the Government has discovered that these things are not good for the health of the Polynesian, so the Samoan wears his *lava-lava* and drinks his *kava*, and lives in his cool and lovely thatched hut, and is happy. And—final test of administration—the population is no longer decreasing.

But I think there's more than luck or German wisdom at the bottom of the happy condition of Samoa. Something in the very magic of the place seems to subdue or soften the evil in men. Heaven forbid I should deny that mean and treacherous and cruel acts of white men and brown are on record. But as a rule the greedy or the boorish, once they settle there, appear to mellow and grow quiet. Between this sea and sky even a trader becomes almost a gentleman, even a Prussian almost lovable, and the very missionaries are betrayed by beauty, and contentment takes them unaware.

Samoa has been well governed. The people have been forbidden a few perils of civilisation, and for the rest are left pretty well to themselves. Go up from Apia across the mountains,

or round the coast, or take a boat over to the other big island, Savaii, and you find them living their old life, fishing and bathing and singing, and never a sign of a white man. They are guaranteed possession of their land. They'll sometimes complain faintly of 'taxation'—a small head-tax the Government exacts, which compels the individual to some four or five days' work a year. The English inhabitants themselves have had no grumble against the Germans except that they incline to be 'too kind to the natives'—an admirable testimonial. And traders in the Pacific say they always get far better treatment from the customs and harbour authorities at Apia than at the British Suva, in Fiji.

And yet the Samoans do not like the Germans. When I was there, nearly a year ago, I was often asked, "When will Peritania (Britain) fight Germany, and send her away from Samoa?" They have no complaint against the Germans. They have merely a sentimental and highly flattering preference for the English. On a recent visit of an English gunboat to Apia, the officers were entertained at a Samoan dinner party, with music and dances, by an eminent and very charming young princess. The princess is a

famous beauty, with the keen intelligence Samoans have if they care, a wonderful dancer, possessed of a glorious singing voice and a perfect knowledge of English. The party was a great success. The princess led her guests afterwards to the flag-staff. Before anyone could stop her, she leapt on to the pole and raced up the sixty feet of it. That also is among the accomplishments of a Samoan princess. She seized the German flag, tore it to pieces, brought it down, and danced on it. So the tale is; and it is probably true. In the villages where I stayed it was amusing how swiftly and completely the children forgot the few words of German the Government sometimes had them taught; while one or two common phrases, '*Morgen*,' '*gut*,' etc., were retained as extremely good jokes by the boys and girls, occasions of inextinguishable laughter, through the absurdity of their sound and the very ridiculous Germanness of them. . . .

I wish I were there again. It is a country, and a life, that bind the heart. There is a poem:

"I know an island,
Lovely and lost, and half the world away;
And there, 'twixt lowland and highland,

Lies a pool, rich with murmur and scent and glimmer,
And there my friends go all the radiant day,
Each golden-limbed and flower-crowned laughing swimmer,"

—and so on. It tells how ugly and joyless by comparison the fellow's own country sometimes seems, filled with money-making and fogs and such grey things:

"Evil and gloom, and cold o' nights in my land;
But,—I know an island
Where Beauty and Courtesy, as flowers, blow."

So it goes, with a jolly return on the rhyme. But the whole poem is a bad one. Still, the man felt it, the magic. It is a magic of a different way of life. In the South Seas, if you live the South Sea life, the intellect soon lapses into quiescence. The body becomes more active, the senses and perceptions more lordly and acute. It is a life of swimming and climbing and resting after exertion. The skin seems to grow more sensitive to light and air, and the feel of water and the earth and leaves. Hour after hour one may float in the warm lagoons, conscious, in the whole body, of every shred and current of the multitudinous water, or diving under in a vain attempt to catch the radiant butterfly-coloured fish that flit in and out of the thousand windows

of their gorgeous coral palaces. Or go up, one of a singing flower-garlanded crowd, to a shaded pool of a river in the bush, cool from the mountains. The blossom-hung darkness is streaked with the bodies that fling themselves, head or feet first, from the cliffs around the water, and the haunted forest-silence is broken by laughter. It is part of the charm of these people that, while they are not so foolish as to 'think,' their intelligence is incredibly lively and subtle, their sense of humour and their intuitions of other people's feelings are very keen and living. They have built up, in the long centuries of their civilisation, a delicate and noble complexity of behaviour and of personal relationships. A white man living with them soon feels his mind as deplorably dull as his skin is pale and unhealthy among those glorious golden-brown bodies. But even he soon learns to *be* his body (and so his true mind), instead of using it as a stupid convenience for his personality, a moment's umbrella against this world. He is perpetually and intensely aware of the subtleties of taste in food, of every tint and line of the incomparable glories of those dawns and evenings, of each shade of intercourse in fishing or swimming or dancing with

the best companions in the world. That alone is life; all else is death. And after dark, the black palms against a tropic night, the smell of the wind, the tangible moonlight like a white, dry, translucent mist, the lights in the huts, the murmur and laughter of passing figures, the passionate, queer thrill of the rhythm of some hidden dance—all this will seem to him, inexplicably and almost unbearably, a scene his heart has known long ago, and forgotten, and yet always looked for.

And now Samoa is ours. A New Zealand Expeditionary Force took it. Well, I know a princess who will have had the day of her life. Did they see Stevenson's tomb gleaming high up on the hill, as they made for that passage in the reef? Did Vasa, with his heavy-lidded eyes, and that infinitely adorable lady Fafaia, wander down to the beach to watch them land? They must have landed from boats; and at noon, I see. How hot they got! I know that Apia noon. Didn't they rush to the Tivoli bar—but I forget, New Zealanders are teetotalers. So, perhaps, the Samoans gave them the coolest of all drinks, *kava*; and they scored. And what dances in their honour, that night!—but, again, I'm afraid the *houla-houla* would shock

a New Zealander. I suppose they left a garrison, and went away. I can very vividly see them steaming out in the evening; and the crowd on shore would be singing them that sweetest and best-known of South Sea songs, which begins 'Good-bye, my Flenni' ('Friend,' you'd pronounce it), and goes on in Samoan, a very beautiful tongue. I hope they'll rule Samoa well.

XV

AN UNUSUAL YOUNG MAN

SOME say the Declaration of War threw us into a primitive abyss of hatred and the lust for blood. Others declare that we behaved very well. I do not know. I only know the thoughts that flowed through the mind of a friend of mine when he heard the news. My friend—I shall make no endeavour to excuse him—is a normal, even ordinary man, wholly English, twenty-four years old, active and given to music. By a chance he was ignorant of the events of the world during the last days of July. He was camping with some friends in a remote part of Cornwall, and had gone on, with a companion, for a four-days' sail. So it wasn't till they beached her again that they heard. A youth ran down to them with a telegram: "We're at war with Germany. We've joined France and Russia."

My friend ate and drank, and then climbed a hill of gorse, and sat alone, looking at the sea. His mind was full of confused images,

and the sense of strain. In answer to the word 'Germany,' a train of vague thoughts dragged across his brain. The pompous middle-class vulgarity of the building of Berlin; the wide and restful beauty of Munich; the taste of beer; innumerable quiet, glittering *cafés*; the *Ring*; the swish of evening air in the face, as one *skis* down past the pines; a certain angle of the eyes in the face; long nights of drinking, and singing, and laughter; the admirable beauty of German wives and mothers; certain friends; some tunes; the quiet length of evening over the Starnberger-See. Between him and the Cornish sea he saw quite clearly an April morning on a lake south of Berlin, the grey water slipping past his little boat, and a peasant-woman, suddenly revealed against apple-blossom, hanging up blue and scarlet garments to dry in the sun. Children played about her; and she sang as she worked. And he remembered a night in Munich spent with a students' *Kneipe*. From eight to one they had continually emptied immense jugs of beer, and smoked, and sung English and German songs in profound chorus. And when the party broke up he found himself arm-in-arm with the president, who was a vast Jew, and with an

Apollonian youth called Leo Diringer, who said he was a poet. There was also a fourth man, of whom he could remember no detail. Together, walking with ferocious care down the middle of the street, they had swayed through Schwabing seeking an open *café*. Café Benz was closed, but further up there was a little place still lighted, inhabited by one waiter, innumerable chairs and tables piled on each other for the night, and a row of chess-boards, in front of which sat a little bald, bearded man in dress clothes, waiting. The little man seemed to them infinitely pathetic. Four against one, they played him at chess, and were beaten. They bowed, and passed into the night. Leo Diringer recited a sonnet, and slept suddenly at the foot of a lamp-post. The Jew's heavy-lidded eyes shone with a final flicker of caution, and he turned homeward resolutely, to the last not wholly drunk. My friend had wandered to his lodgings, in an infinite peace. He could not remember what had happened to the fourth man. . . .

A thousand little figures tumbled through his mind. But they no longer brought with them that air of comfortable kindliness which Germany had always signified for him. Some-

thing in him kept urging, "You must hate these things, find evil in them." There was that half-conscious agony of breaking a mental habit, painting out a mass of associations, which he had felt in ceasing to believe in a religion, or, more acutely, after quarrelling with a friend. He knew that was absurd. The picture came to him of encountering the Jew, or Diringer, or old Wolf, or little Streckmann, the pianist, in a raid on the East Coast, or on the Continent, slashing at them in a stagey, dimly-imagined battle. Ridiculous. He vaguely imagined a series of heroic feats, vast enterprise, and the applause of crowds. . . .

From that egotism he was awakened to a different one, by the thought that this day meant war and the change of all things he knew. He realised, with increasing resentment, that music would be neglected. And he wouldn't be able, for example, to camp out. He might have to volunteer for military training and service. Some of his friends would be killed. The Russian ballet wouldn't return. His own relationship with A——, a girl he intermittently adored, would be changed. Absurd, but inevitable; because —he scarcely worded it to himself—he and she and everyone else were going to be different.

His mind fluttered irascibly to escape from this thought, but still came back to it, like a tethered bird. Then he became calmer, and wandered out for a time into fantasy.

A cloud over the sun woke him to consciousness of his own thoughts; and he found, with perplexity, that they were continually recurring to two periods of his life, the days after the death of his mother, and the time of his first deep estrangement from one he loved. After a bit he understood this. Now, as then, his mind had been completely divided into two parts: the upper running about aimlessly from one half-relevant thought to another, the lower unconscious half labouring with some profound and unknowable change. This feeling of ignorant helplessness linked him with those past crises. His consciousness was like the light scurry of waves at full tide, when the deeper waters are pausing and gathering and turning home. Something was growing in his heart, and he couldn't tell what. But as he thought 'England and Germany,' the word 'England' seemed to flash like a line of foam. With a sudden tightening of his heart, he realised that there might be a raid on the English coast. He didn't imagine any possibility of it *succeeding*,

but only of enemies and warfare on English soil. The idea sickened him. He was immensely surprised to perceive that the actual earth of England held for him a quality which he found in A——, and in a friend's honour, and scarcely anywhere else, a quality which, if he'd ever been sentimental enough to use the word, he'd have called 'holiness.' His astonishment grew as the full flood of 'England' swept him on from thought to thought. He felt the triumphant helplessness of a lover. Grey, uneven little fields, and small, ancient hedges rushed before him, wild flowers, elms and beeches, gentleness, sedate houses of red brick, proudly unassuming, a countryside of rambling hills and friendly copses. He seemed to be raised high, looking down on a landscape compounded of the western view from the Cotswolds, and the Weald, and the high land in Wiltshire, and the Midlands seen from the hills above Prince's Risborough. And all this to the accompaniment of tunes heard long ago, an intolerable number of them being hymns. There was, in his mind, a confused multitude of faces, to most of which he could not put a name. At one moment he was on an Atlantic liner, sick for home, making Plymouth at nightfall;

and at another, diving into a little rocky pool through which the Teign flows, north of Bovey; and again, waking, stiff with dew, to see the dawn come up over the Royston plain. And continually he seemed to see the set of a mouth which he knew for his mother's, and A——'s face, and, inexplicably, the face of an old man he had once passed in a Warwickshire village. To his great disgust, the most commonplace sentiments found utterance in him. At the same time he was extraordinarily happy. . . .

My friend, who has always, though never very passionately, believed himself a most unusual young man, rose to his feet. Feeling a little frightened, and more than a little unwell—for he is a person of quiet mental habits—he wandered down the hill. He kept slowly moving his head, like a man who wishes to dodge a pain. I gather that he was conscious of few definite thoughts till he reached the London train. He kept remembering, unwillingly, a midnight in Carnival-time in Munich, when he had seen a clown, a Pierrot, and a Columbine tip-toe delicately round the deserted corner of Theresienstrasse, and vanish into the darkness. Then he thought of the lights on the pavement in

Trafalgar Square. It seemed to him the most desirable thing in the world to mingle and talk with a great many English people. Also, he kept saying to himself—for he felt vaguely jealous of the young men in Germany and France—"Well, if Armageddon's *on*, I suppose one should be there." . . . Of France, he tells me, he thought little. The French always seemed to him people to be respected, but very remote; more incomprehensible than the Japanese, more, even, than the Irish. Of Russia, less. She meant nothing to him except a sense of hysteria and vague evil which he had been given by some of her music and literature. He thought often and heavily of Germany. Of England, all the time. He didn't know whether he was glad or sad. It was a new feeling.

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THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me :
  That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
  In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
  Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
  Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
  A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
    Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England
      given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
  And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
    In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Page image of *The Soldier* from
1914 and Other Poems originally published in
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Epilogue

Rupert Brooke seemed to have it all during the Edwardian Era in England as a popular student—a charming young man with plenty of friends—but also self-doubt about his ability as a poet and his place in society. Though best known as a poet of the World War I era community, Brooke was also skilled at writing detailed letters which seemed more like a memoir than just actual letters to friends and family. He lived in a time when the world was changing and apparently it affected him in different ways which led to a confused state of reality about whom he was and who he imagined himself to be. There is no doubt that Brooke was a talented writer from his poems and sonnets—but at the same time there are significant clues in his many letters that he was suffering from an identity crisis which probably would have emerged at some point during his life had he lived. Like so many of his generation he seemed to be searching for something beyond his reach—and his writings give clues but no conclusions. Exactly what he was searching for remains unknown because death cut short a brilliant future that seemed to lay ahead for such a unique young man. Today Brooke remains known for his thought-provoking poetry as well as his "movie star" photographs which appear throughout the Internet making him seem more

like a matinee idol from Hollywood's golden age than a gifted writer of war poetry. Rupert Brooke was on his way to Gallipoli when he died at 27 in April 1915. He was buried on the Greek island of Skyros. His grave is visited regularly by visitors to Greece—paying homage to a life cut short by tragic events.

Rupert Brooke's death in April 1915 ended his chances of any future plans to continue his writing career—but it made him a legend in literary circles around the world. Since his death his poetry and letters have been reprinted and appreciated by many who were born long after his passing at 27. With the Internet age his "movie star" photographs have also become widely available to a worldwide audience. While many of his contemporaries have slowly faded away he remains popular with a celebrity crowd probably due to how modern some of his photographs appear to be. Like Anne Frank from a generation later, Brooke remains forever young (due to his untimely death) and approachable by an audience that never tires of reading his poetry or letters.

Brooke has also had several books written about him that purports to be factual biographies but are actually tabloid-worthy printed trash. Unfortunately some present-day biographers have proudly played fast and loose with the facts surrounding his personal life—recreating his character the way they wished he were like—rather than whom he actually was during his short life. Scrutiny should be paid to books repeating tawdry gossip gathered from websites created by fans with questionable credibility. Brooke was by no means perfect and seemed from the account by Edward Marsh to have had issues with his ability as a writer—which created plenty of self-doubt for Brooke. Brooke also had plenty of other faults involving his relationships with women, views on people of color, and mental stability to name a few. But despite these character flaws known by Brooke's mother, she personally oversaw Marsh's book before it was published in 1918, making sure everything in Marsh's memoir about her late son was accurate and didn't demean him in any way with inaccurate statements, yet still allowing material showing that her son was imperfect. Although Marsh tried to not

say in his book that Brooke's mother delayed publication of his book for the issue stated above—that is exactly what occurred.

Of course no one can fault Mary Ruth Brooke over her insistence to have final say on Marsh's memoir about Rupert Brooke since her son's memory was all she had left and wanted to make sure his brief life and legacy was preserved for history.

There is no account of his life by Brooke himself but in his published letters an autobiography of sorts exists chronicling how he felt about circumstances surrounding his life. There is no way to know how Rupert Brooke would have fared as a writer had he lived but he accomplished something many writers never achieve with a long career—and that is being associated with a particular era—namely World War I—where some of the best poets came into their own with words that defined a lost generation.

In 1975 Cathleen Nesbitt published an autobiography about her life and career in which she mentioned Rupert Brooke. From her visible reaction during television interviews when asked about her feelings for him it seemed she considered him more of a friend than potential husband. She died in 1982 at 92.

As of 2025 there has never been a movie or miniseries about Rupert Brooke's life. There has been one attempt at a documentary—from 1982. Mainly it was just bland readings of his poetry which seemed more like an episode of *Entertainment Tonight* rather than an attempt to tell his complicated story.

About the Authors

Edward Marsh was a British civil servant and worked as a private secretary for Winston Churchill for many years. He was also friendly with many poets of the era—most notably Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon. Marsh died in January 1953 at 80.

Rupert Brooke was a well-known Edwardian poet and journalist known for his sonnets about the First World War. His most famous sonnet titled *The Soldier* has been reprinted in numerous magazines, newspapers, and books for over a century. He died at the age of 27 from an infection off the coast of Greece on his way to Gallipoli. His writings consisting of poems, sonnets, and travel journals were published following his death. He has been the subject of numerous biographies as well as memoirs written by close friends and former girlfriends. His grave on the island of Skyros in Greece is regularly visited by tourists and literary fans despite the passage of over a century since his death at 27.

About the Series Editor

Gary Brin was born in 1965 and has lived in the United States Virgin Islands, Hawaii and California. He has edited numerous original literary works over the years—both new and revised. In 2019 he established Standish Press to bring forth interesting fictional and historical material usually ignored by mainstream publishers because of specific views or content. In addition to publishing books, he also created the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Public Library (named after the mother of Abraham Lincoln) in 2014 to make available hard-to-find books to a worldwide audience.

Production Notes

1918 and 1916 memoir of Rupert Brooke by his friend Edward Marsh—and letters written by Brooke—from digitally restored versions of the original editions.

Manuscript images reset by Gary Brin
Front cover design and book layout by Gary Brin
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Material compilation by Gary Brin

“Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves.”

Abraham Lincoln
1859

“So long as we love, we serve, so long as we are loved by others I would almost say that we are indispensible, and no man is useless while he has a friend.”

Robert Louis Stevenson
1883

“It’s a wonder I haven’t abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart.”

Anne Frank
1944

“A friend is faithful, trusting and helpful, someone that realizes your imperfections and stands by you. A friend makes your problems his problems. He will be with you when you need him most. He is never too busy to listen to you. This is what a friend means to me.”

Freddie Prinze
1977

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Marie Laplace
February 13, 1892
August 16, 1981

Robert J. Questel
June 22, 1911
August 4, 1990

Marie Anicia Berry Questel
January 13, 1912
April 9, 1997

Eugene Albery Brin
March 21, 1932
May 26, 1977

Lucille Questel Brin
February 21, 1940
December 10, 2000

They never got to have the dreams they wanted or expected but their lives were important nevertheless.

Standish Press

FIRST TIME IN ONE VOLUME

A Memoir and an Autobiography in Letters

Using digitally restored page images from the original publications of *Rupert Brooke* and *Letters from America*—first published in 1918 and 1916—the short life of noted World War I poet and journalist Rupert Brooke is revisited in this dual biographical collection by his friend Edward Marsh as well as Brooke's own letters from his travels to Canada and America before his tragic death at 27. Also included in this edition is additional material detailing little known historical facts about his life and enduring legacy that hasn't been published previously anywhere. This volume also contains 24 pages of digitally restored photographs of Rupert Brooke from childhood to adulthood.

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